509

THE

ARMENIAN;

OR,

THE GHOST SEER.

A HISTORY FOUNDED ON FACT.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF

F. SCHILLER,

AUTHOR OF THE ROBBERS, DON CARLOS, &c.

BY

THE REV. W. RENDER.

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509
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THE

GHOST SEER.

LETTER V.

BARON F... TO THE COUNT O...

JULY 1.

AS the time for our departure from Venice approaches, we are determined to employ this week in an examination of all the remarkable pictures and buildings, which is generally delayed to the laſt moment. They praiſed highly the work * of Paul Ve-

* The marriage at Cana.

ronefe, which was to be feen in a Benedictine convent upon the Ifland St. George. You muft not expect from me a minute defcription of this beautiful mafter-piece, from the contemplation of which I derived the moft fatisfactory pleafure; but it was a fight worthy to be enjoyed longer. We fhould have had as many hours as minutes to ftudy a painting of a hundred and twenty figures, which is thirty feet in breadth. It is impoffible to obferve the beauties which the artift has difplayed in it, by juft glancing at the whole. It is however a pity, that fo valuable a work, which ought to adorn a place of more utility, fhould be buried within the walls of a convent for a few monks to gaze at The church of this convent deferves alfo the attention of the connoiffeur: it is one of the handfomeft in the city.

Towards

Towards evening we ſet off for the *Giudecca*, to ſpend a few hours in the charming gardens that ſurround it. The ſociety, which was not numerous, ſeparated very ſoon; and Civitella, who had been the whole day ſeeking for an opportunity to ſpeak to me in private, thus addreſſed me—

"You are the friend of the Prince, and poſſeſs his confidence, as I know from good authority. When I went to-day to his hotel, I met a man upon the ſtairs, and immediately gueſſed the buſineſs he had been upon. I found the Prince, as I entered his apartments, thoughtful and dejected"

I was about to interrupt him.

"You cannot deny it," he continued. "I know the man, for I took very par-

ticular notice of his perfon. Is it pof-fible that the Prince, who has friends at Venice, to whom he is as dear as life, fhould in a cafe of neceffity make ufe of fuch a wretch ? Be fincere, baron !—Is the Prince embarraffed in his circumftances ? You may endeavour to hide the truth, but it is in vain. What I cannot learn from you I will obtain from a man to whom every fecret is a prize, and ready to be fold."

"What, Marquis !"

"Pardon me. I muft endure the charge of being indifcreet, to avoid the imputation of ingratitude. The Prince faved my life, and what goes far beyond that, he has inftilled into my mind the principles of virtue. If I fee the Prince act in a manner which muft be expenfive to him, and beneath his dignity ;

dignity; if it is in my power to affift him, I never can refift it."

"The Prince is not now in any embarraffment. Several remittances, which we expected from Trient, are, indeed, unexpectedly detained; but accidentally perhaps, or from the idea that his departure is near at hand. This is now fixed upon; and till then—"

He fhook his head. "Do not deceive me," faid he. "I mean not by doing this to diminifh the obligation I owe the Prince. No, not all the riches of my uncle could repay him. I am anxious to free him from one unhappy moment. My uncle poffeffes a large fortune, and which I can difpofe of as if it were my own. I confider it a fortunate circumftance, that the moment is arrived when I can be ufeful to the Prince. I know,"

he continued; "with what delicacy the Prince will treat my offer;—but on the other hand, I hope he will lay aſide his prejudices, and ſuffer me to enjoy the ſatisfaction of having in ſome meaſure returned the obligation I owe to him."

He continued to urge his requeſt till I had promiſed him that I would do all in my power to make the Prince accept his offer. But I knew his character, and for that reaſon I deſpaired of ſucceſs. He appeared ſatisfied however with my promiſe, though he confeſſed that it would give him great uneaſineſs if the Prince conſidered him in the light of a ſtranger.

Loſt in converſation, we had wandered from the company, and were juſt about to return, when Z*** approached us.

"I thought

" I thought the Prince had been with you?"—ſaid he. " Is he not here?"

We immediately returned with him, thinking to find the Prince with the other part of the company.

" The ſociety is together, but the Prince is not among them," ſaid I; " I really do not know how it happened that we miſſed him."

Here Civitella ſuggeſted, that he might poſſibly have viſited the adjoining church, which he had a little time before remarked for its beauty. We immediately went to ſeek for him there. As we approached it, we diſcovered Biondello waiting at the entrance. When we came nearer, we obſerved the Prince ruſh haſtily out from a ſmall door; the agitation of his mind was im-

preſſed upon his countenance. He called Biondello to him, and ſeemed to inſtruct him in the execution of ſome commiſſion of conſequence; his eyes were conſtantly directed to the gate, which remained open. Biondello haſtened into the church. The Prince, without perceiving us, puſhed through the crowd, and went back to the ſociety.

It was reſolved to ſup in an open pavillion, and the Marquis, without our knowledge, had procured ſome muſicians to entertain us with a concert. It was quite ſelect; but there was among the performers a young lady who ſung delightfully, and whoſe voice did not more enchant us than the beauty of her perſon. Nothing ſeemed to make an impreſſion upon the Prince; he ſpoke little, and anſwered our queſtions confuſedly; his eyes were conſtantly rivetted upon the ſpot from whence Biondello was to come;

come; and it was viſible to all, that ſomething of conſequence affected his mind. Civitella aſked him how he liked the church; he could not give any deſcription of it. He ſpoke of ſeveral remarkable pictures, which were highly eſteemed; but he had not obſerved them. We perceived that our queſtions were unpleaſant to him, and therefore we diſcontinued our enquiries. One hour after another paſt away, and Biondello did not arrive. The impatience of the Prince could no longer be concealed; he went from ſupper very early, and walked alone up and down the aiſles of the church with agitated ſteps. No perſon could imagine what had happened to him. I did not venture to aſk him the reaſon for ſuch a ſudden change in his diſpoſition, as I could not now treat him with that familiarity I did formerly. With ſo much more impatience, therefore, did I expect the ar-

rival of Biondello, that he might explain to me the myftery.

It was paft ten o'clock before he came back. The accounts which he brought to the Prince did not contribute to diffipate the gloom of melancholy. He returned to the pavilion apparently uneafy and diffatisfied. Soon after the boat was ordered, and we went home.

I could not find a fingle opportunity the whole evening to fpeak with Biondello; and I was at laft obliged to go to bed without being able to fatisfy my curiofity. The Prince difmiffed us very early; but a thoufand unpleafant reflections which tormented me kept me awake. I could diftinctly hear the Prince walking up and down his chamber till a late hour; at laft I dropt into a dofe, but was foon roufed from flumber by a perfon

perſon who appeared at my bedſide with a lamp in his hand. When I looked up, I diſcovered it to be the Prince. He could not cloſe his eyes, he ſaid, and begged of me to paſs the night with him. I would have riſen and dreſt myſelf, but he commanded me to remain as I was, and ſeated himſelf on my bed.

"An extraordinary circumſtance has happened to me to-day," ſaid he, "and the impreſſion it has made upon my mind will never be effaced. I went, as you muſt recollect, to ſee *** church, to which Civitella directed my attention, and which had at a diſtance excited my curioſity. As neither you nor he were preſent, I went in alone, and bid Biondello wait for me at the entrance. The church was quite dark and ſolitary. The aiſles were cold and damp; I felt a ſudden chillneſs ſteal all over me; I ſaw myſelf alone amidſt the dead, in a ſanctuary

where a ſolemn ſilence, as in the grave, reigned in every part. I placed myſelf in the middle of the dome, and gave my ſoul up to contemplation. Soon however the gothic beauty of the building arreſted my attention. It appeared, as I examined it, more and more delightful. It called forth the powers of awful meditation. The evening bell was tolling; its hollow ſound, as I heard it faintly in the aiſle, overpowered me with an unuſual melancholy. Some altarpieces at a diſtance attracted my attention. I went nearer to view them diſtinctly; unperceived, I had wandered through the aiſles of the church, and was approaching the end, when, by accident, I went round a pillar up a flight of ſteps, which lead into a ſide chapel, decorated with ſeveral little altars and ſtatues of ſaints. As ſoon as I entered the chapel I heard a ſoft whiſpering, turned towards the ſpot from whence

I heard

I heard the voice, and about two ſteps from me diſcovered a female figure. Fright almoſt overpowered me; but after a few moments had elapſed I recovered, and contemplated an object which I cannot deſcribe with juſtice."

"And does your Highneſs know for certain that it was alive—that it was not fancy—a picture of the brain?"

"Hear farther—It was a lady. Until that moment I had never regarded the ſex!—The rays of the ſetting ſun, that illumed the chapel, enabled me to obſerve that ſhe was in the act of praying before an altar—Nature ſeemed to have laviſhed all her perfections on her lovely form. She was elegantly dreſſed in black ſilk, which ſpread around her in large folds like a Spaniſh rope; her long light-coloured hair burſt from under the veil, and flowed in charming diſorder

down her back; one of her hands touched the crucifix, as ſhe reſted her head upon the other. But how ſhall I find words to deſcribe to you the angelic beauty of her countenance! The ſun-beams played upon it, and heightened the divine expreſſion that ſeemed to glow in it. Can you call back to your mind the Madona of Florence?—She was the exact copy of the artleſs enchanting beauty which is ſo irreſiſtibly expreſſed in that picture."

Of the Madona of which the Prince ſpeaks, the caſe is this: Shortly after your departure, the Prince became acquainted with a painter from Florence, who had been ordered to Venice to paint an altar-piece for a church; his name I do not now remember. He brought with him three pictures, which he had executed for the gallery in the Canarian Palace. The ſubjects were a Madona, a Heloiſe, and a Venus in

diſhabille.

difhabille. From the exquifite manner in which they were all painted, it was almoft impoffible to decide which was fuperior in beauty. The Prince alone did not hefitate a moment to decide; they were fcarcely put before him when the Madona attracted his whole attention; in both the others the genius of the painter was admired, but this he furveyed with enthufiafm. He was fo enamoured with it, that he could not be perfuaded to quit it. The artift, we could perceive by his countenance, enjoyed the judgment of the Prince; he had the wit not to feparate the three pictures, and demanded 1500 zequins for them. The Prince offered him half the price for the Madona. The artift infifted upon his demand, and who knows what might have happened if he had not found a purchafer for his works? Two hours after, all the three pieces were gone; and we have not feen them fince.

This was the picture that the Prince brought to his memory.

" I ftood," he continued, " in filent admiration. She did not obferve me; fhe was not difturbed by my arrival; fo entirely was fhe loft in adoration. She prayed to her God and I to her eyes; faints, altars, or burning tapers, had never before reminded me that I was in a fanctuary; I was feized with enthufiafm. Shall I confefs to you, that I believed, from that very moment, in the influence of the crucifix fhe held in her beautiful hand. I read our Saviour's anfwer in her eyes. Thanks to her charming piety! She painted his true character to me. My ideas wandered with her's through the ways of heaven.

" She rofe, and I ftepped afide with embarrafsment; the noife I made difcovered me. The unexpected appear-

ance

ance of a man alarmed her; I was fearful that my boldneſs might offend her; for as ſhe glanced at me, the beauteous ſmiles of innocence and virtue played upon her countenance. As ſhe roſe from prayer, I was the firſt happy creature which offered itſelf to her ſight.

"In an adjoining corner of the chapel, I ſaw an elderly lady riſe from her ſeat, and come towards us. I had not till then perceived her. She was but a few ſteps diſtant from me, and no doubt had witneſſed all my actions. I was ſomewhat confuſed—I caſt my eyes as it were involuntarily on the ground, and they ruſhed by me."

"I looked after her as ſhe paſſed along the aiſle. The beautiful figure was with her—What grace, what majeſty appeared in all her ſteps! She was no longer the being that I firſt beheld;

held; no, ſhe was poſſeſſed of a thouſand new charms. I followed at a diſtance with trembling ſteps, undetermined whether I ſhould overtake her or not. I waited with impatience to ſee if ſhe would beſtow upon me another look;—for the one ſhe gave me as ſhe paſſed by was loſt upon me.

"With what extreme anxiety did I expect it!

"They ſtopped ſuddenly, but I was not able to ſet a foot forwards. The elderly lady, who perhaps might be her mother, obſerved the diſorder of her hair, and immediately adjuſted it.

"That done, they approached the gate. I doubled my ſteps—ſhe diſappeared by degrees—I could only ſee the ſhadow of her robe as it floated in the air. A flower had fallen from her boſom,

bofom, fhe returned in hafte to fetch it—fhe once more looked back and—after me!—whom elfe could fhe feek in a place fo folitary? She appeared as if I was no longer a ftranger to her;—but fhe deferted me like the flower which feemed unworthy to be replaced in her bofom. Dear F*** I am almoft afhamed to own to you with what childifh rapture I interpreted that look—that laft expreffive look, which was not perhaps defigned for me!"

"You may rely upon it, it was."

"It is fingular," faid the Prince, after a long filence, "that we fhould lament the lofs of an object we never faw before—but I feel as if I exift only for her. That in a fingle moment man fhould difplay two fuch oppofite characters? I look back upon the happinefs I received yefterday morning with all that exquifite

exquiſite feeling with which we trace the days of childhood. This picture lives in my remembrance, and forces me to acknowledge that it is my god!"

"Recollect, gracious Sir," ſaid I, "in what gloomy thoughtfulneſs your mind was wrapt when this Ideal Divinity appeared to you; the aſſociation of ideas alone inflamed your imagination. Quitting the beautiful light of day, and the tumult of the world, you were ſuddenly ſurrounded by darkneſs and ſilence, impreſſed with ſenſations which, as you confeſſed yourſelf, tended to impreſs you with melancholy, whilſt the majeſty of the ſtructure, and the contemplation of beauty in the works of different artiſts, aided the train of ideas you were ſupporting. In the mean time, alone and ſolitary, you gave yourſelf up to reflection; in the midſt of your meditations you obſerve the figure of a female, where

you

you did not expect to meet a foul—ftill more enchanting by a fine form, which was heightened by a favourable illumination of the fetting fun—a fortunate fituation, and a captivating difplay of piety—what is more likely than that your difturbed fancy deceived you?"

"Can memory give back impreffions it has never received? In my whole country there is nothing that I could juftly put in comparifon with that picture. Entire and unchanged, as in the moment of beholding it, it lies in my memory; I can think of nothing but that picture—and in vain might you offer me a whole world for it!"

"Gracious Prince, this is love."

"Muft it then be by a name that I am to be made happy? Love!—Do not think fo meanly of my feelings as to accufe me

of

of that which influences a thoufand feeble fouls! Who has ever felt what I endure! Such a being as I am never was in exiftence before! How then can you give my fenfations a name? It is a new and fingular fuffering, originating with her that I adore.—Love! No, from love I am quite fecure!"

"You fent Biondello, no doubt, to find out the path your fair unknown purfued, and to get fome information of her—What accounts did he bring you back?"

"Biondello has difcovered nothing. He found her at the church gate. An old well-dreffed man (who had the appearance of a citizen from this city, and not a fervant) conducted her to the boat. Some poor peafants fmiled upon her as fhe paffed them, and fhe rewarded them with money. By this means one of her

hands became viſible; it was ornamented with ſeveral precious ſtones. She ſaid ſomething to her companion which Biondello did not underſtand; he maintained it to be Greek. She had to walk a conſiderable diſtance to the canal. The people began to collect round her; ſo extraordinary a ſight ſurprized all the peaſants. Nobody knew her—but beauty is born a queen. All made way for her in an humble ſubmiſſive manner. She let fall a black veil over her face, and haſtened into the boat. To the extent of the channel of the *Giudecca* Biondello kept the boat in ſight, but could not purſue its courſe farther, owing to the concourſe of people."

"Has he not taken notice of the waterman?"

"He endeavoured in vain to find him; for it was not one of them with whom

whom he is connected. The poor people of whom he enquired could give him no other account, than that the lady for ſeveral weeks paſt had landed on the ſame ſpot on a Sunday evening, when ſhe diſtributed ſome gold pieces amongſt them. They were Dutch ducats, which I diſcovered by one that Biondello had procured."

"A Greek lady of fortune and rank, as it ſhould ſeem by your deſcription. That is quite ſufficient, gracious Sir, to aid us in a diſcovery. But a Greek lady and in a catholic church!"

"Why not? She may have changed her religion. But there is ſomething in all this that we do not underſtand. Why does ſhe come only once a week? Why only on a Sunday evening, at an hour when the church is entirely deſerted, as Biondello told me?—Next Sunday

Sunday evening muſt decide this. But till then, my dear friend, aſſiſt me in the difficult taſk of paſſing away the time! Days and hours will elapſe in their ordinary courſe, but are of too long duration for a mind like mine."

"And when that day arrives—what is to be done?"

"What is to be done? I ſhall ſee her again. I ſhall diſcover who ſhe is, and the place of her reſidence. Why ſhould I be unhappy, when I know how to alleviate my ſufferings?"

"But our departure from Venice, which is fixed for the beginning of next month?"

"Could I imagine that Venice contained ſuch a treaſure! I will not think of my paſt life, but date my exiſtence from this hour."

I thought this a favourable opportunity of keeping my word with the Marquis. I gave the Prince to underſtand, that for him to continue at Venice in the preſent ſtate of our finances, would by no means be proper; and that if he prolonged his ſtay beyond the term, he could not expect that his court would ſupport him. I now diſcovered a ſecret which till then had been unknown to me, that he received ſuccours clandeſtinely from his ſiſter, the reigning Princeſs of . . . which ſhe is very willing to increaſe if his court ſhould abandon him. This ſiſter is a pious fanatic, you know, and thinks the great ſavings which ſhe makes at a very œconomical court, cannot be diſpoſed of better than to a brother whoſe character ſhe enthuſiaſtically venerates. I was confident ſometime back, that there exiſted a good underſtanding between them, and many letters had been exchanged; but

but as the Prince's own reſources were ſufficient to defray his expences, I never once thought of this ſecret channel. It was now clear that the Prince had expences which were unknown to me; theſe ſtill remain a ſecret; and if I may conclude from what I know of his character, they are not of that nature which will diſgrace him. I was certain now that I had found him out. I did not therefore heſitate to make known to him immediately the offer of the Marquis, which, to my great aſtoniſhment, was accepted without any difficulty. He gave me free liberty to conduct the buſineſs with the Marquis in ſuch a manner as I thought beſt, and then ordered me to diſmiſs the uſurer, and write immediately to his ſiſter.

It was day-break when we ſeparated. This event has made me very uneaſy for more reaſons than one, particularly

that it compels us to prolong our ſtay at Venice. This ſudden paſſion for the unknown lady I expect will rather be of ſervice to him than otherwiſe. She will perhaps be the means of reclaiming the Prince. I hope it will affect him in the ordinary way with a ſlight illneſs, and ſo eradicate his prejudices.

Farewel, my dear friend. I have written this letter on the ſpur of the moment. The poſt is about to depart. You will receive this letter with the foregoing one on the ſame day.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

BARON F... TO THE COUNT O...

JULY 20.

THIS Civitella is one of the moſt ſerviceable men in the world. The Prince had not long left me when a note arrived from the Marquis, in which he politely reminded me of my promiſe. I ſent him immediately a bond, executed by the Prince, for ſix thouſand zechins; in leſs than half an hour it was returned, with an incloſed draught for double the ſum. The Prince accepted it, but inſiſted that the

bond ſhould be given in return, which was only for the ſpace of ſix weeks.

This whole week has been ſpent in enquiries after the myſterious Greek lady. Biondello put his machines in motion, but all were fruitleſs. He has indeed found the waterman; but he could learn nothing farther from him, than that he had ſet both the ladies on ſhore upon the Iſland of Murano, where two chairs waited for them. He ſuppoſed her to be an Engliſh lady, becauſe ſhe ſpoke a foreign language, and paid him in gold. He did not know her conductor, but he appeared to him to be a looking-glaſs manufacturer from Murano. We were now convinced that we had not to ſeek for her in the Guidecca, and that ſhe was probably at home upon the Iſland of Murano; but the misfortune was, that from the deſcription which the Prince gave

gave of her, ſhe could not be known by a third perſon. The impaſſioned frenzy which ſeized him at the moment hindered him from obſerving her minutely. To that to which other people would have principally directed their attention, he was quite blind. After ſuch a deſcription as his, one might have ſought for her in Arioſto or Taſſo with more probability than upon a Venetian iſland. His enquiries muſt be made with the greateſt ſecreſy and precaution, to prevent impeaching the virtue of the lady; and as Biondello was the only perſon beſides the Prince who had ſeen her through the veil, and therefore could know her again, they ſought together for her in all places where it was thought poſſible that ſhe could be. The life of this good-tempered man was this week ſpent in traverſing all the ſtreets of Venice. In the Greek-church he made particular enquiries, but all

to no purpoſe; and the Prince, although more and more impatient at every diſ-appointment, was at laſt obliged to comfort himſelf till the next Sunday evening.

His impatience was pitiable. Nothing pleaſed him—nothing excited his attention. His hours were ſpent in anxiety and diſtreſs: he fled from ſociety, but the evil increaſed in ſolitude. He was never more ſurrounded by viſitors than he was this week. His departure had been announced as near at hand—all preſſed themſelves upon him. Being obliged to entertain thoſe people, to avoid all ſuſpicion, we contrived to occupy his mind in order that we might diſſipate his melancholy. In this ſituation Civitella hit upon gaming; and to detain the company, he propoſed to ſtake very high. In the mean time he flattered himſelf that he ſhould

tempt

tempt the Prince to play, which he thought would very ſoon conquer his romantic ideas. This ſcheme, although hazardous, they knew could not injure him, as they had it in their power to deſiſt at any time from playing.

"Cards," ſaid he, "have often prevented me from purſuing follies which I anticipated, and relieved me from reflecting upon thoſe I had committed.

"The tranquillity of mind which a pair of charming eyes deprived me of, I have very often found again at the pharo-table; and women never had half the effect upon my ſpirits as not being enabled to play from poverty."

I conſented, in as far as I thought Civitella might be in the right; but the means which we inſtituted began ſoon to become more dangerous than the evil

we endeavoured to deſtroy. The Prince, who thought to make the game attractive by betting very high, found very ſoon no bounds to it. He was quite out of his element. What he did was with apparent indifference, although his actions betrayed impatience and uneaſineſs of mind. You know how indifferent he is about money, and now he became totally inſenſible of its value. Gold pieces ran away like water. He loſt almoſt upon every card, becauſe he played without paying any attention. He forfeited large ſums, becauſe he ventured like a deſperate unfortunate man.—Dear O... I communicate this with an aching heart: in four days we had not any of the twelve thouſand zechins.

Do not reproach me. I accuſe myſelf ſufficiently. But could I prevent it? Could I oblige the Prince to liſten

to

to me? Could I do more than remonſtrate with him? I did what laid in my power: ſurely I may ſay, that I am not guilty.

Civitella alſo loſt. I won ſix hundred zechins. The unexampled misfortune of the Prince was obſerved by all, and for that very reaſon he would not abandon the game. Civitella, who likes to ſhew his readineſs to oblige him, lent him immediately the required ſums.

This ſcene is cloſed, but the Prince is indebted to the Marquis twenty-four thouſand zechins. Oh how I long for the ſpare-money of his pious ſiſter! If all princes acted thus, my dear friend! His Highneſs behaves towards the Marquis as if he had done him the greateſt honour, and thus he plays his part very well.

Civitella ſought to conſole me, by ſaying, that he thought his extraordinary ill luck would powerfully aſſiſt in bringing the Prince back again to his reaſon.

As for the money, he was not anxious about it. He himſelf did not miſs it—three times as much was at the Prince's ſervice. The Cardinal alſo aſſured me, that the ſentiments of his nephew were ſincere, and that he was always ready to ſupport him in them.

The worſt was, that theſe extraordinary ſacrifices did not at all affect him. One would think the Prince at leaſt had played with ſome intent: but it was not ſo. The paſſion which we endeavoured to deſtroy ſeemed only to increaſe with bad ſucceſs: when a great ſum was ſtaked, all preſſed around his chair with expectation, but his eyes

were

were watching for Biondello, to ſteal from his looks the news which he might have for him. Biondello always returned unſucceſsful, and he as continually loſt.

The money at laſt fell into very diſtreſſed hands. Some poor noblemen, who report ſays are ſupported by the alms they obtain in the market-place, came into the houſe perfect beggars, and left it as rich as Jews. Civitella pointed them out to me.

" Behold," ſaid he, " how many poor devils this money is of ſervice to; how comes it then that men of wit do not direct their attention to ſuch practices. This circumſtance pleaſes me: it is princely. A great man may ſometimes, by his errors, make people happy, and like a bounteous ſtream enrich

enrich the neighbouring fields by overflowing its banks.

Civitella's ideas are noble—But the Prince owes him twenty-four thouſand zechins.

At laſt the long-expected Sunday evening arrived, and my maſter could not be prevented from walking in the afternoon in the *** Church. His ſtand was taken exactly upon the ſame ſpot in the chapel where he had ſeen for the firſt time the unknown that had captivated him, yet ſo that he could not immediately be ſeen by her. Biondello was ordered to keep watch near the church gate, and to form a connection with the attendants of the lady. I had determined to ſtep, as by accident, into the boat at its return, to trace the unknown farther, if the firſt ſcheme ſhould not ſucceed. At the

place where ſhe was, upon the report of the waterman, landed, we hired two chairs, and the Prince commanded the chamberlain Z... to follow in a ſeparate boat, and he himſelf would meet her in the church, and try his fortune there firſt. Civitella did not aſſiſt us, becauſe he had already acquired a bad character with the females at Venice, and therefore he determined not to make the lady miſtruſt his friend by his preſence. You ſee, my dear Count, that it could not be for want of plans, if the beautiful unknown eſcaped us.

Never was there offered up in a church more ſanguine prayers for ſucceſs, nor greater hopes created, and never was man deceived more cruelly. The Prince waited till ſun-ſet. He trembled at every noiſe that approached the chapel: the creeking of every church-door increaſed his anxiety. Seven long hours

hours paſſed, and no Greek lady arrived. I ſay nothing of the ſtate of his mind. You know well what it is to be diſappointed in the attainment of an object for which one has ſighed ſeven days and nights.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

THE BARON F. . . TO THE COUNT D'O. . .

AUGUST.

NO, my dear friend, you wrong the good Biondello. Indeed you entertain a falſe ſuſpicion of him. I give up to your prejudices all Italians, but this man is honeſt.

You think it ſingular that a man of ſuch brilliant talents, and conduct without example, ſhould hire himſelf as a ſervant, if he had no ſecret ends to anſwer; and from that you draw the concluſion that he is a ſuſpicious character. How! Is it then ſo extraordinary that

that a man of talents ſhould make himſelf reſpected by a prince, in whoſe power it is to advance his fortune? Is it diſhonourable to ſerve him? Does not Biondello clearly ſhew that his attachment to the Prince is perſonal? He has already confeſſed to him that he has a particular favour to aſk of him, and which, when known, will undoubtedly unravel all the ſecret. He perhaps has entered into his ſervice with ſome particular view; but may it not be innocent?

It appears ſtrange to you that this Biondello, when you were preſent, did not diſplay the great talents which he now ſeems to be poſſeſſed of. That is true, but he had not then an opportunity to diſtinguiſh himſelf? The Prince did not at that time want him, and his other qualities were diſcovered in him by accident.

But we experienced not long ago a proof of his ſincerity, which will remove all your doubts. The Prince of late has been very particularly noticed. Endeavours are made to obtain a ſecret knowledge of his manner of life, and of his acquaintances. I know not for what reaſon thoſe enquiries are made; but attend to what I ſhall communicate.

There is at St. George a public-houſe, to which Biondello often reſorts. He may have ſome love intrigue there for aught I know. He was there for ſeveral days in the company of advocates, men in office under the government, merry brothers and old acquaintances. They were equally aſtoniſhed and rejoiced to behold him again. The former friendſhip was renewed, and every one related his adventures ſince their ſeparation: Biondello alſo told his. He did

it

it in a few words. They wiſhed him joy of his new ſituation: they had heard of the ſplendid manner in which the Prince lived; of his liberality in particular towards his people that knew how to keep a ſecret; his acquaintance with the Cardinal A... was alſo well known; and his partiality for gaming, &c. &c. Biondello ſtarted. They told him, that he played his part very well, but they ſaid they knew that he was the ſecret meſſenger of the Prince. The advocates ſat on each ſide of him, and the bottle was ſpeedily emptied. They perſuaded him to drink more: he excuſed himſelf, and ſaid that his head would not bear much wine; he therefore affected to be intoxicated.

"Yes," ſaid one of the advocates at laſt; "Biondello may underſtand his buſineſs; but he has not yet finiſhed his leſſon—he is but half a ſcholar."

"What

"What is wanting?" ſaid Biondello?

"He underſtands one art," ſaid the man; "that is, to keep a ſecret; but he is not acquainted with the other, which is to get rid of it again with profit."

"Am I likely to find a purchaſer for it?" aſked Biondello.

The other part of the company left the room, and he remained alone with his two friends, who now came to the point. To make it ſhort, he was to give them the means by which the Prince became acquainted with the Cardinal and his nephew, to diſcover to them the ſources by which the Prince received, and the way he exhauſted his money, and to deliver into their hands the letters which were written to the Count O... Biondello appointed to

meet

meet them, and difcufs it another time; who it was that induced them to do this he could not get from them, but concluded, from the great offers which were made to him, that it muft be fome wealthy perfon who commiffioned them to entice him to this confeffion.

Laft night he difcovered to my mafter the whole of this affair. He was anxious to imprifon the advocates; but Biondello remonftrated, and faid, if they were ever to be at liberty again, he fhould lofe all his credit with that clafs of people, and perhaps his life. Thefe fort of people all hang together, and ftand up for each other. He would fooner, he faid, have the high council at Venice for his enemy than be looked upon by them as a betrayer; and he could not be fo ufeful to the Prince, if he loft the confidence

of

of theſe people. We tried to conjecture with whom this curioſity might originate. Who is there at Venice that can be intereſted in knowing what my maſter receives and ſpends; what concerns he has with the Cardinal A... and what I write to you? Is this a ſcheme of the Prince .. d...? or is the Armenian with us again?

LETTER VIII.

BARON F... TO THE COUNT O...

AUGUST.

THE Prince abounds in happineſs and love. He has found the Greek lady. Hear how this happened.

A ſtranger who had travelled over Chiozza, and gave an enchanting deſcription of that beautiful city, which is ſituated near the Gulph, made the Prince deſirous to ſee it.

Yeſterday his wiſhes were put in execution; and to avoid all unneceſſary expence, no other perſon attended him but Z... Biondello, and myſelf, as he travelled incognito. We took places in

in a boat that ufually failed to that place with company. The fociety was not very felect, and the voyage far from being agreeable.

Chiozza is built upon piles, like Venice, and has about forty thoufand inhabitants in it. You meet there very few people of diftinction, the ftreets are crowded with fifhermen and failors. He who wears a wig and a mantle, is called a rich man; lappels and veils are the fign of poverty. The city itfelf is handfome, but to admire it, you muft not have feen Venice.

The waterman, who had more paffengers to carry, was obliged to be quick in his return to Venice, and nothing at Chiozza particularly attracted the notice of the Prince. The veffel was full when we arrived. As the company was rather troublefome on our

paſſage there, we hired a ſeparate room for our better accommodation. The Prince enquired, who were the other paſſengers? A Dominican, was the anſwer, and ſeveral ladies. My maſter was not at all curious to ſee them, and immediately went to his room.

The Greek lady was the ſole object of our diſcourſe on our paſſage, and it was the ſame on our return. The Prince repeated his adventure in the higheſt tranſports of delight; the time was paſſed in forming plans, and then rejecting them; till before we were aware of it, Venice was in ſight. Some of the paſſengers left the veſſel, the Dominican was amongſt them. The waterman went to the ladies, who, as we now learned, had been only ſeparated from us by a thin partition. He aſked them, where he ſhould land them. "Upon the iſland of Murano," was the

A·2

the anſwer.—"The iſland of Murano!" cried the Prince, as the ſudden tranſport of joy ſhot through his ſoul. Before I could make him any anſwer, Biondello ruſhed in.

"Do you know with whom we have travelled?"—The Prince ſtarted up—

"Is ſhe here?"

"Yes, ſhe is," continued Biondello. "I am juſt come from her conductor."

The Prince ruſhed out of the room. A thouſand ſenſations overpowered his mind. He was ſeized with a ſudden trembling: a death-like paleneſs ſpread itſelf over his countenance. I burned with expectation. It is impoſſible for me to deſcribe to you our ſituation.

The boat ſtopped at Murano. The Prince jumped upon the ſhore. She came. I perceived, from the Prince's countenance, that it was ſhe. Her appearance did not leave any doubt of the fact. A more beautiful figure I never ſaw: the flattering deſcriptions the Prince had given of her, were fully realized. A bluſh of ſatisfaction was ſpread over her face, when ſhe beheld the Prince. She muſt have overheard our whole converſation, and could not doubt but that ſhe had been the ſubject of it. She gave her attendant a ſignificant look, which ſeemed to ſay, This is he! and with an artleſs embarraſſment ſhe caſt her eyes upon the ground. A ſmall board was placed from the ſhore to the ſhip, on which ſhe had to walk. She ſeemed anxious to land; but although ſhe affected timidity, it appeared to ariſe more from a deſire to be aſſiſted, than the dan-

ger

ger of croffing the plank. The Prince ftretched out his arm to affift her. Neceffity overcame etiquette. She accepted his hand, and leaped upon the fhore. The fudden agitation of the Prince made him uncivil; for he forgot the other lady, who waited for the fame act of politenefs—And what would he not have forgotten in that moment? I at laft rendered her that fervice, and deprived myfelf of the pleafure of obferving how the interview, which took place between my mafter and the lady, affected her.

He ftill held her hand in his; and, I believe, without knowing that he did fo.

"It is not the firft time, Signora, that—that—" He hefitated.

" I ought to remember," ſhe liſped.

" In the church," ſaid he.

" In the church," ſaid ſhe. " Yes, it was there."

" And could I flatter myſelf to-day— ſo near."

Here ſhe drew her hand ſoftly out of his. He recovered himſelf immediately. Biondello, who in the mean time had ſpoken with the ſervant, came to his aſſiſtance.

" Signora," he began, " the ladies ordered their chairs to be waiting for them at a certain time, but we have arrived here ſooner than was expected. Here is a garden in the vicinity, where you may retire to avoid the tumult."

The

The propofal was accepted, and you may judge with what delight the Prince accompanied her. They remained in the garden till late in the evening. It fell to my lot, affifted by Z... to entertain the old lady, that the Prince might remain undifturbed with his beloved. He made good ufe of his time, for he obtained permiffion to pay her a vifit. He is now there. As foon as he returns, I fhall know more of the matter.

Yefterday, when we came home, we found the expected remittances from our court, but accompanied by a letter, which affected my mafter very much. He is recalled by it, and in a tone which he has not been accuftomed to. He has anfwered it contemptuoufly, and intends to prolong his ftay here. The remittances are juft fuffi-

 cient

cient to pay the intereſt of the capital which he owes. We look for an anſwer from his ſiſter with great anxiety.

LETTER IX.

BARON F... TO THE COUNT O...

SEPTEMBER.

THE Prince has had a quarrel with his court: all our refources from thence are cut off.

The fix weeks, which were limited for my mafter to have paid the debt due to the Marquis are elapfed, we have received no remittances from his coufin, whom he earneftly folicited to affift him; neither have we had any from his fifter. You may eafily imagine that Civitella does not remind him of his engagement; but the faithful memory of the Prince continually

impofes upon him the idea, that he is ftill the Marquis's creditor. Yefterday came letters from the reigning Count.

We had juft concluded a new contract with the mafter of our hotel; and the Prince had openly declared, that he intended to protract his ftay in Venice. Without fpeaking a word, he gave me the letter. His eyes darted fire: to me his countenance was a fufficient indication of the contents.

Should you imagine, dear O... that they are at *** informed of all my mafter's connections; and that calumny has been very bufy in inventing falfehoods to defame him?

They had heard with difpleafure, it is faid in the letter, that the Prince had not fupported his former character, but had purfued a conduct which was

was in total contradiction to his former praise-worthy manner of thinking. They affirmed, that he rioted with women, and was addicted to gaming in an extravagant manner; that he was involved in debt; that he studied physiognomy, and sought after conjurors; that he held suspicious correspondence with prelates, and that he possessed a household, which was more than his income could support. They had even been assured, that his intention was, to compleat his bad conduct by turning an apostate, and embracing the Roman Catholic religion; and, to exculpate himself from the last serious accusation, they expected he would immediately return. A banker at Venice, to whom he was directed to deliver in the amount of his debts, was authorized, immediately after his departure, to satisfy his creditors; for, under circumstances so unpleasant, they did not think

it ſafe to truſt the money in his own hands.

What accuſations! and in what an artful manner alledged! I took the letter, and read it over a ſecond time—I endeavoured to palliate the offence, but I did not ſucceed.

Z... now reminded me of the ſecret inquiries which had been made by the Advocates. The time, the contents, all circumſtances agreed. We had falſely attributed them to the Armenian. Now it was clear from whom they were derived. Apoſtaſy!—But whoſe intereſt can it be to calumniate my maſter in ſuch an execrable manner? I fear it is a piece of miſchief invented by the Prince ... d... who will follow it up, to get my maſter from Venice.

He

He remained ſilent, with his eyes fixed upon the ground. His countenance made me tremble. I threw myſelf at his feet.

"For Heaven's ſake, gracious Prince," I exclaimed, "do not think of it ſo ſeriouſly. You ſhall, you will, have the greateſt ſatisfaction. Leave the buſineſs to me. Send me there, for it is beneath your dignity to go perſonally to juſtify yourſelf againſt ſuch vile calumnies: permit me to do it. The calumniator muſt, he ſhall, be named, and the eyes of the ... muſt be opened."

In this ſituation Civitella found us: he aſked, with aſtoniſhment, the reaſon of our embarraſſment. Z... and I were ſilent. The Prince, who never made any diſtinction between him and us, was now too much agitated in his mind to act prudently on this occaſion,

and

and commanded us to communicate to him the contents of the letter. I hesitated, but the Prince snatched it from my hands, and gave it to the Marquis himself.

" I am your debtor, Marquis," he began, after he had finished the letter, " but let that give you no uneasiness. Allow me but a respite of twenty days, and you shall be paid."

" Gracious Prince!" exclaimed Civitella, with feeling and surprize, " do I deserve this?"

" You did not choose to remind me of my engagement. I know your delicacy in this matter, and thank you for your liberality. In twenty days, as I said before, you shall be paid."

" What is the meaning of all this?" ſaid Civitella with anxiety. " Explain to me this myſtery. I cannot comprehend it."

We gave him all the information in our power. He fell into a rage. The Prince, he ſaid, muſt inſiſt upon ſatisfaction: the offence is infamous. In the mean time, he conjured the Prince to make uſe of his property and credit as if they were his own.

The Marquis left us, and the Prince ſtill continued ſilent. He walked with haſty ſteps up and down the room: ſomething of an extraordinary nature ſeemed to oppreſs his ſenſes. At laſt he ſtood ſtill, and murmured incoherently—" Wiſh yourſelf happineſs—at nine o'clock he died."

We looked at him with horror.

" Wiſh yourſelf happineſs," he continued. " Happineſs—Did he not ſay ſo? What was it that he meant by theſe words?"

" Why do you now repeat that fooliſh admonition?" I exclaimed. " What has this to do with it?"

" I could not then underſtand what the Armenian meant by that expreſſion. Now I comprehend him. Oh, it is intolerably hard to have a maſter over one!"

" My deareſt Prince!"

" Who can make me experience it! —Ah! it muſt be exquiſite!"

He ſtopped again. There was in his countenance a wildneſs reſembling inſanity. I never before had ſeen him ſo much agitated.

"The moſt miſerable among the people," he continued, "or the next Prince to the throne! are the ſame. There is but one diſtinction among men —to obey or to govern."

He once more looked into the letter.

"You have ſeen the man," he continued, "who has ventured to write thus to me. Would you ſalute him in the ſtreet, if fate had not made him your maſter? By Heavens! there is ſomething wonderfully great about the wearer of a crown!"

He continued ſpeaking in this unintelligible manner for ſome time, and many

many of his words I dare not commit to paper. But the Prince has diſcovered to me a circumſtance, which involved me in ſurprize and anxiety, and which may probably ere long lead to bad conſequences. We were ignorant of the family-circumſtances at the court of . . . until now."

The Prince anſwered the letter upon the ſpot, though I oppoſed it with violence, and the manner in which he has done it will, in all probability, prevent a reconciliation.

You will alſo be deſirous, dear O. . . to hear ſomething about the Greek lady. I can ſay but little upon that ſubject, as I am not able at preſent to learn any thing ſatisfactory concerning her. The Prince diſcloſes nothing, becauſe he is, no doubt, bound to ſecreſy, as I preſume, by his word of honour. But

ſhe

ſhe is not the Greek lady that we ſuppoſed. She is a German, of noble extraction. It is reported, that ſhe has a mother of rank, and alſo that ſhe is the fruit of an illicit connection, of which much was ſaid in Europe. Clandeſtine purſuits, it is ſaid, have forced her to ſeek refuge at Venice, and theſe alſo are the reaſons why ſhe avoids ſociety, and ſecrets herſelf in a private dwelling, where it would have been impoſſible for the Prince to have diſcovered her. The veneration with which the Prince ſpeaks of her, and certain traits which he obſerves in her conduct, ſeem to authorize this preſumption.

He is paſſionately fond of her, and his attachment increaſes every day. In the firſt outſet, the viſits were not repeated very often; however, the ſecond week the interval was ſhortened, and

and now not a day paſſes without the Prince's being there. We are not able to ſee him ſometimes for whole evenings together; and even, if he is not in her ſociety, ſhe is the only object that occupies his attention. His nature ſeems to be changed. He walks about like a madman: he is inattentive to every thing that formerly intereſted him.

What will be the conſequence, deareſt friend, I cannot imagine. The quarrel with his court has thrown my maſter into the degrading ſituation of being dependent upon an individual, the Marquis Civitella. He is at preſent maſter of all our ſecrets, and perhaps our fate. Will he always think ſo nobly as he does at preſent? Will this good underſtanding be of long duration? and is it right to give ſo much power and

con-

confequence to a man, let him be ever fo excellent a character?

A letter has been difpatched to the fifter of the Prince. The iffue of it I hope to communicate to you in my next letter.

LETTER X.

THE COUNT O... IN CONTINUATION.

BUT this promiſed letter never arrived. Three whole months paſſed over, before I obtained any further accounts from Venice; an interruption which is explained in the ſequel. All the letters of my friend to me had been ſuppreſſed. You may gueſs the ſituation of my mind, when I, in the month of December, obtained the following writing, which mere accident (Biondello's illneſs) brought to my hands.

"You do not write. You do not anſwer.—Come—Oh, come upon the wings of friendſhip. Our hope is gone. Read

Read this with refolution. All our hope is gone.

"The Marquis's wound is mortal. The Cardinal cries for revenge, and his affaffins feek the Prince's life. My mafter—Oh, my unhappy mafter! Is it come to this? Unworthy, terrible fate! We muft fly like criminals from the poniards of murderers.

"I write to you from the Convent ***, where the Prince has taken refuge. He is lying afleep upon a mattrafs by my fide. Alas! it is the flumber of exhaufted nature, which will foon again refign him to the horror of new fufferings. During the ten days that fhe was ill, no fleep clofed his eyes. I was prefent at the diffection of the body. They difcovered traces of poifon. To-day fhe will be buried.

"Alas, dear O... my heart is almoſt broken. I was witneſs to a ſcene that never will be rooted from my memory. I ſtood by her dying bed. She expired with divine reſignation, and her laſt words hailed her beloved to accompany her to the throne of heaven. All our reſolution forſook us; the Prince alone was firm and collected; and though he muſt have ſuffered almoſt beyond deſcription, yet he had fortitude enough to refuſe the pious fanatic her laſt prayer.

In this was incloſed the following.

TO THE PRINCE ... FROM HIS SISTER.

"THE religion which the Prince *** has embraced, will not let him want the means to continue his preſent mode

mode of life which is to be attributed to that alone. I have tears and prayers for an unfortunate, but no more benefits for one unworthy of them."

HENRIETTE.

I ſet off immediately, and travelling night and day, in the third week I arrived at Venice. My haſte was of no conſequence. I went to comfort an unhappy being; but I found one who did not want my feeble aſſiſtance.

F . . . was very ill, and was not to be ſpoken with, when I arrived; they gave me, however, the following note:

"Return, dear O . . . to where you came from. The Prince does not want your aſſiſtance nor mine. His debts are payed, the Cardinal conſoled, and the Marquis reſtored. Do you remember the Armenian, who entrapped us

laſt year ſo dexterouſly? In his power you'll find the Prince; who has theſe five days attended maſs."

Notwithſtanding this, I waited upon the Prince, but was refuſed admittance. On the bed of my friend, however, I heard the following extraordinary hiſtory.

After taking my lodgings, not far from the Prince's hotel, I was obliged to wait a long time before I could ſpeak with my friend F . . . He was indiſpoſed with a fever, and the phyſician that attended him deſpaired of his recovery. My ſituation was afflicting in the extreme; for I beheld the Prince, as it were, upon the verge of a moſt terrible abyſs, and my friend F . . . on the brink of the grave. Harraſſed almoſt to death with misfortunes, I reſolved, at all events, to

 ſpeak

ſpeak once more with the Prince; but I found, after ſeveral ineffectual attempts, that it was in vain; and the laſt viſit I made I was diſmiſſed with the following intimation:

"That the Prince was not to be ſpoken to by me, and that it was alone owing to his former attachment for me that I ſtill enjoyed my liberty."

Biondello, who told me this, added to the weight of his information, by his ſerious and ſtrongly marked countenance. I was not able to make him any anſwer, but felt my knees ſhake under me, and my lips quiver in a convulſive manner. I went immediately to my lodgings, and, almoſt inſenſible with apprehenſion, threw myſelf into an arm chair, and endeavoured to diſpel the gloom of anticipation that hung over me. A noiſe brought me at laſt

to myſelf; I looked up and ſaw the phyſician who attended F . . . ſtanding before me, whom I had not heard enter the room during my perplexity.

"I like to be myſelf the meſſenger of happy news," ſaid he to me, "and I come to announce to you, that your friend F . . . finds himſelf ſo much recovered, that he is able to converſe without difficulty, and wiſhes to ſpeak to you; the cauſe of his illneſs ſeems to be entirely removed, but you muſt expect to ſee him weak, and rather low."

I did not ſuffer him to proceed in his ſpeech, but wrapt myſelf up in a cloak, and haſtened to congratulate my friend upon his recovery, with as much ſatisfaction as if the welfare of millions had depended upon my walk.

"Oh!

"Oh! How much have I ſighed after you, my dear O . . ." ſaid he with a feeble voice, as he preſſed my hand to his breaſt; "but the phyſician conjured me, until now, to avoid all ſenſations."

I looked at him. He was lying before me the picture of death. A tear ſtarted from my eye; I could not ſuppreſs it; he obſerved it.

"I thank you, my friend, for this ſincere proof of affection; it convinces me that my loſs will not be indifferent to you."

"Speak not of your death," ſaid I, with concern, "the phyſician aſſures me he has removed your complaint, and that in a little time you will be well again

"Aye," he replied, with a deep ſigh, "he has repeatedly ſaid ſo, but I think

the contrary. My internal feelings prove to me that I cannot exiſt long in this world."

He ſunk back on his pillow. A cold ſweat ſtood upon his forehead. His ſpeech became fainter by degrees; but I collected ſufficient to underſtand, that he ſuſpected ſome one had poiſoned him, for that he and myſelf had been ſuſpected for ſome time of having maliciouſly and ſecretly calumniated the Prince at court. This accounted for the cold and unfriendly treatment I had lately received from the Prince; and the very thought of being ſubject to ſo powerful an enemy threw me into a ſtate of melancholy. I looked back upon my conduct, and tried to recollect any circumſtance that might throw ſome light upon the matter, but in vain. In the midſt of theſe reflections F . . . awaked, which arouſed me from

my

my lethargy. His firſt word was to entreat me to be ſecret as to what he had diſcovered reſpecting himſelf, and perſuaded me, fearful that a ſimilar lot would befall me, to abſent myſelf immediately after his death from Venice. He added, with a ſmile,

"See me laid in my grave firſt, for I wiſh very much to receive that laſt ſervice from the hand of a friend whom I affectionately love."

I embraced him, and bedewed his death-pale cheek with tears.

"I forgive thoſe," he ſaid, "who are the cauſe of my death; it will not be painful to me; and, as you have not deprived me of your preſence in my laſt hours, I owe you the greateſt thanks."

 A long

A long paufe enfued;—after that F . . . related to me as follows. I have collected into a narrative the fentences which he fpoke at intervals, and added what I extorted from him by queftions; for his feeblenefs did not permit him to fpeak in a continued feries. I alfo was often obliged to affift him on account of the defect of his memory, as far as it could be done by queftions. I muft be permitted to introduce him fpeaking here, becaufe of all that I communicate, nothing is done by me but the chronological arrangement. I have indeed given myfelf the trouble to ufe his own language, which I am enabled to do, as I had my pocket-book always in my hand, and carefully noted down every thing which I thought would flip from my memory.

"I begin," faid F . . . "my ftory from that period, when my letters to

you

you were intercepted. By the laſt of them * you know, that the Prince had fallen out with his court, and had nothing more to expect from thence. His ſiſter did not write to him, and left us for the ſpace of two months in an anxious ſtate of uncertainty, when the letter, which I incloſed for you laſt, arrived. It threw the Prince into the moſt horrid ſtate of diſtreſs. His debt to Civitella was very much increased, and his expences were not in the leaſt diminiſhed; and we found there was not any probability of maintaining the ſyſtem much longer.—

"I muſt confeſs to you, that at that period I ſeldom enjoyed a happy hour. In the moſt ſplendid entertainments I was ſolitary, and ſunk in deep reflec-

* That from the month of September. See the foregoing.

 tion.

tion. Z . . . contented himſelf as well as he could. If he was not obliged to be at home, from neceſſity, he ſeldom ſtaid with me; and if at any time I mentioned the ſubject of our diſtreſs to him, he never liſtened to me, but anſwered, that he did not chooſe to interfere in his maſter's concerns. I had no friend left; and from you I received no anſwers to my letters. The Prince was ſeldom to be ſeen, being in general occupied with Biondello, upon the management of his intrigues. He muſt have had no other thought than that of viſiting the Greek lady, for he had already promiſed four times to the Marquis to pay him; but, inſtead of that, he borrowed freſh ſums. You know formerly, with what ſtrict punctuality he performed a promiſe; but at that period he was completely inattentive to it.

"It

" It was as if every thing exifted only for him, and that he had the fole right to command it. The Marquis ftill continued the generous unintereſted friend of the Prince, who ftudied his wifhes, before they came to maturity, and fought, with unremitting zeal, to fatisfy him in every particular. In his hands, I may fay, our fate refted; and yet he knew how to give his conduct fuch a colour, that an indifferent perfon would have thought his exiftence depended upon a fingle look from the Prince.

" Thus ftood the affair, when the Prince one evening came home very late from the *Bucentauro*. He brought a book with him; the contents of which he was fo anxious to be acquainted with, that, during the time he was undreffing, he defired me to read it out aloud to him; for Biondello,

on whom this honour was ufually conferred, under the pretext of indifpofition, which he had complained of for fourteen nights, had been difmiffed to go to bed. At laft the Prince retired to reft, and being unable to repofe until the book was finifhed, I was obliged to fit upon the fide of his bed and continue my tafk. He liftened very attentively, as he fupported his head upon his right arm.

"The clock in the fteeple of St. Mark's church ftruck one,* at that inftant both the candles, which ftood before me upon the table, were extinguifhed. We heard it thunder, which in a few minutes became fo violent,

* The Count O . . . has probably given here the hour in which this happened, according to our reckoning of time; in Venice, and other provinces of Italy, they begin to count the hours from *one*, at the beginning of the night.

that

that the houſe ſeemed to ſhake under us; quick flaſhes of lightning illuminated our room, and immediately all the windows and doors burſt open.

" *Beware, Prince! that thou doſt not ſtain thy hand with blood,*" cried a hollow frightful voice—Again it thundered and lightned, after which a ſolemn ſtillneſs reigned for ſome time.

" Is this a dream?"—cried the Prince, after a pauſe.

" I did not make any anſwer, and was in doubt whether I ſhould quit the room or not. In the mean time, Biondello ruſhed in.

" For God's ſake, what is the matter?" he exclaimed with trepidation; but, without waiting for an anſwer, he took the wax candles from the

the table, and brought them back lighted. He was half dreſſed, and appeared ſo dreadfully frightened, that I became very much alarmed for him. Obſerving that the Prince had not received any injury, he ſeemed in ſome meaſure comforted.

"The Prince aſked him if he had heard any thing? He anſwered in the affirmative, and his relation accorded exactly with what we had heard; however, he did not ſee any lightning. He was not aſleep, and for that reaſon his evidence effectually proved, that our imaginations had not deceived us. Biondello received orders to go to bed again, and the Prince commanded him to obſerve the ſtricteſt ſilence as to what he had heard and ſeen.

"What do you think of this?" ſaid the Prince, as ſoon as he was gone.

"I muſt

"I muſt own to you, gracious Prince, that this event has almoſt deprived me of my ſenſes.

"Confeſs, that you will not willingly believe it to be a miracle, becauſe you know that I hold them in contempt."

"And yet I know not how to explain it in a natural way.

"We have read ſtrange things in the book; how, if our fancy ſhould have play'd us a trick?"

But that we both heard one and the ſame thing, that the candles in the mean time were extinguiſhed at the ſame moment, and doors and windows burſt open, is certain; and Biondello has heard the ſame?

"That

" That might, perhaps, be explained. The windows burſt open becauſe they were not faſtened; the door from the ſame cauſe; the preſſure of the air became then ſtronger, and the thorough draft put out the candles."

But the words we heard—the lightning—the thunder?

" I aſcribe them to imagination."

But could imagination work upon *three* different perſons exactly at the *ſame* time, and in the *ſame* manner?

" If all our ideas turn to the ſame point, why not?—Have you never heard, that whole ſocieties have been deceived in the ſame manner? To what cauſe elſe can we aſcribe the exiſtence of ſo many fanatics?"

I allow this; but Biondello's ideas could not ſurely be ſimilar to ours, and yet—

"It is poſſible. Have you not heard that he was lying awake in his bed, and in all probability liſtened to every thing that was ſaid. Only a thin wainſcot ſeparates his room from mine, and you, beſides, read with a very loud voice?"

I became ſilent, not becauſe I was convinced, but becauſe I did not like to contradict him; for his countenance proved to me that he was angry at my diſputing the queſtion with him. He ſeemed ſatisfied, but the recollection of what had paſſed baniſhed ſleep from my eyes.

The following day was deſtined for a grand feaſt, which was given in honour

honour of the Prince of St. Benedetto. All that Venetian ſplendor and pleaſure could invent was united here. It was to conclude with a very brilliant maſquerade-ball. A valet-de-chamber, whom the Prince a ſhort time ago took into his ſervice, becauſe he ſaved his life, remained alone at home; whilſt myſelf and the Prince's whole houſehold, Biondello not excepted, who forgot his complaints to join the party, went to the entertainment. The Prince was pleaſed with his attention ſo much the more, becauſe, in ſpite of his indiſpoſition, he inſiſted upon going in ſuch a manner, that the greateſt love for his Prince could only have induced him. In the maſk of a Bramin he followed him every where, at a little diſtance, like his ſhadow. I did not ſuffer him to go out of my ſight, becauſe I expected ſomething might take place, that might lead to a diſcovery

of the myſterious warning we had heard the foregoing night; to which ground I alſo attributed the foreſight of Biondello. My conjecture was but too well founded. The croud of maſks which were preſent, left little room in the ſpacious hall for the dancers; thus, they were rather crouded. The Prince, in endeavouring to paſs ſome one in great haſte, tore a part of his garment. He was obliged to leave the hall immediately to repair the accident. Biondello conducted him into a ſide room, and I followed. Picture to yourſelf our aſtoniſhment, when we beheld, in a receſs, the Greek lady and Civitella upon a ſofa, in an amorous ſituation. Not one of us was able to utter a word. The Prince ſeemed thunderſtruck: his eyes rolled wildly in his head, and the muſcles of his face became convulſive. The couple apparently did not obſerve us. Before we could prevent him, the Prince

Prince ſeized a dagger, which laid upon a table, and ruſhing towards Civitella laid him bleeding at his feet. The Greek lady ran with loud ſhrieks into the hall.

"For God's ſake, ſave yourſelf gracious Prince," exclaimed Biondello, "loſe not a moment". At that inſtant he laid hold of the Prince, who was quite ſtupified, and hurried him away through a ſide-door. I haſtened after them. Scarcely was the door cloſed, when we heard a great noiſe in the room. In their embarraſſment they had probably forgotten to purſue us; we therefore made our eſcape. The Prince wiſhed to go to his hotel, but Biondello prevented him, and added, that he could not be ſecure there. The powers above * puniſh very rigor-

* This expreſſion, or, in his language, *quei in alto,* the Venetians uſe as a name for the tribunal of

rigorously any one that attacks a mask; and in spite of his rank, he was in doubt whether they would not to-morrow morning send after him one of their *Fante's*,* which might have very bad consequences. He promised to conduct him to a place of security till the affair could be settled. Biondello walked before us with hasty steps; we followed him very close, and I must confess, with great dread and anxiety. The apparition played upon my fancy so much, that I saw at every step figures, which seemed to me all armed with daggers. From the prince's countenance, I easily could perceive, that he was also very much discouraged. Not one of us spoke a word. Like fugitive

of the Inquisition. A Venetian is so afraid of that word, that he makes use of it only in cases of great necessity—and speaks of this tribunal with the highest veneration and beating heart.

* An officer of this tribunal.

criminals

criminals we ſtole through the private paſſages and bye ſtreets. We were fortunate enough to meet, near *St. Samuele*, a boat, which, to all appearance, ſeemed waiting for us. We ſtepped into it: Biondello commanded the boatman to row into the *Seſtier* of *Caſtello*, and to land us near *St. Franciſco della Vigna*, a Franciſcan convent. We glided like lightning through the water. Houſes and ſteeples that bordered the river ſoon vaniſhed from our ſight. The moon ſhone with beautiful ſplendor; and, at intervals, we heard the diſtant oars as they daſhed into the ſtream; the melancholy ſong of the *Barcarole*.*— I ſhall

* *Barcarole* are a kind of watermen. They ſing for entertainment, whilſt they are lying ſolitary in their boats, expecting cuſtomers. They know by heart many paſſages of the poets, and add to them muſic of their own compoſition, which they endeavour to make adequate to the words. One is heard to begin, another, who perhaps does not

I ſhall never forget the impreſſion that night made upon my mind.

We arrived, at laſt, at the before-mentioned place; and Biondello procured us, even at that time of night, through the means of an acquaintance, the beſt accommodation. We were obliged to live there in great ſecrecy, and I obſerved that the Prince deeply felt his ſituation. Biondello walked out in different maſks to learn how the matter ſtood, and what the Prince had to fear; but for many days he returned without ſucceſs. At laſt he came into the room, about night-fall, in great agitation.

" We muſt depart from hence, he cried with a trembling voice, we muſt

not know the firſt, hears, and anſwers him, and they ſeldom diſcontinue their ſong till their buſineſs calls them away.

depart

depart this moment from hence! Your life hangs on a thread, my Prince! The Marquis is mortally wounded; the Cardinal has hired twelve aſſaſſins to murder you, and he who perpetrates the deed, is promiſed one hundred ſequins; a price which an aſſaſſin would be ſtudious to earn, were it even to take away the life of the head of the church. They already are acquainted with our abode—we muſt haſten from hence as quickly as poſſible!"

Had not Biondello been with us, we could not poſſibly have eſcaped our fate; but this indefatigable and attentive man aſſiſted us always with the beſt advice. He brought us cloaths, as a diſguiſe, and we hired a boat for our conveyance. Biondello entered into converſation with the waterman, and we experienced, to our aſtoniſhment, in what great danger we were placed, and

and how induſtrious the aſſaſſins were to earn the hundred ſequins. And ſuſpecting that ſome one might be able, by the boatman, to trace our route, to deceive them, we continually changed our boat, and went a very circuitous way about.

At laſt we arrived at the convent . . . A friendly monk, alſo an acquaintance of Biondello, received us at the gate, and conducted us immediately to a room, which was retired and clean, but not furniſhed for the reception of a prince.

" A lady, in the laſt agonies of death, wiſhes to ſpeak to you," ſaid the monk the next day to the Prince.

He ſtarted as if he had ſuffered an electrical ſtroke.

" Who is ſhe ?" he exclaimed haſtily.

 " I do

"I do not know; I have not enquired concerning that. She has lived for two years in this convent. From whence ſhe came is unknown. It is our duty to receive every ſtranger, within our walls, without firſt aſking who they are, and from whence they come?—We ſuffer every one to keep his ſecret, if he will not diſcover it to us willingly."

The Prince ſeemed loſt in deep reflection.

"How long has ſhe been ill?" he ſaid at laſt.

"To day is the ſeventh."

"Where is ſhe? I will go to her!"—

He followed the monk.

In the fick-room, my dear friend, was his Greek lady. I have forgot to mention, that he had not an opportunity to speak to her for two days previous to the unhappy mafquerade-ball; it was clear now what detained her. I myfelf faw her, and I am not able to defcribe my feelings, when I beheld the moft charming creature in the creation, who was formerly the admiration of every one, now the victim of horror and difeafe. Upon her lovely face were marked the figns of death.—I no longer doubted, that at the ball we muft have been miftaken in the perfon; but the Prince, in total oppofition to his former character, ftill entertained his doubts. This affected his fenfibility to fuch a degree, that nothing could be equal to it. His ardent affection threw him into the moft violent paroxifms of defpair, when he faw the object of his heart in the arms of death; but, in a

few minutes, the fatal ſcene at the ball ruſhed upon his mind—he turned from her with diſguſt, impreſſed with the idea that ſhe had treated his love with ſcorn. His eyes ſparkled with rage, and, as in agony, his limbs trembled; but this, when he looked upon the patient innocent, was changed into ſympathetic melancholy. His ſituation was terrible. Although ſhe herſelf ſuffered very much, ſhe ſought to conſole him. This circumſtance almoſt drove him to diſtraction. I tore him by force from her bed. He ſat ſilent in our room for ſome time; at laſt he exclaimed—

"I am ſhamefully deceived! She, whom I adored, deſpiſed me, and rioted licentiouſly in the arms of another."

Gracious

Gracious Prince, be ſatisfied. All circumſtances clearly prove, that ſhe was lying ill here when the deed happened. It muſt have been quite a different perſon.

"Did I not ſee her—I, who preſerved in the ſanctuary of my heart the ſmalleſt of her favours—I, who exiſted only for her, who thought her one and the ſame with myſelf—to be treated thus!"——

Pardon me, gracious Prince, did you not ſay yourſelf, that under ſuch circumſtances, one might be eaſily deceived?

"Did you not ſee her alſo?"

Your raſh action hindered us from obſerving her minutely.

" And how came ſhe to know that I was in the convent. The plan is finely laid to decoy me again into the net; but it will not ſucceed !"

Do not miſtruſt her.—An unhappy affair brought us hither; and, meeting her in ſuch a pitiable ſituation, muſt have operated ſtrongly upon your mind, and—

" Will you remind me of my weakneſs—I believed. from the firſt moment, that it was a juggle ?"

Her illneſs a juggle ?

" Is that impoſſible, after having had the experience that we have ?"

I know not how long this converſation would have laſted; for the more I endeavoured to convince him of his error,

ror, ſomuch the more he oppoſed me; and his underſtanding, formerly ſo enlightened, did not look upon what appeared the fact as at all probable.

Biondello's arrival prevented a continuation of our diſcourſe. He did not, however, bring news of our being ſafe; yet the Prince became, in one reſpect, more compoſed. For, he ſaid it was in ſeveral places reported, that the lady, on account of whom we had ſuffered ſo much, was no other perſon than a certain V . . lli, who was of an indifferent character, and extremely like the Greek lady. The ſimilarity of the dreſs, and the darkneſs of the room in which they were ſitting, ſerved alſo to deceive us. How his beloved knew that he was in the convent, was alſo explained to his ſatisfaction. One of her footmen had diſcovered Biondello—ſhe had often made particular inquiries

 after

after the Prince, and having difcovered his retreat, defired once more to fee and fpeak to her beloved. Confcious of her innocence, her fufferings made a greater impreffion upon the mind of the Prince. He very feldom quitted her bed, and gave himfelf up intirely to forrow. The caufe of her diffolution will alfo be that of mine.—Oh! that I might die with the tranquillity that fhe did! Her patience under her fufferings, her ferenity of mind, when the fhadows of death furrounded her, contributed to make her more beloved than ever. Oh! that I might be certain of fuch a happy death as hers! *

This angel died by poifon; for, on the diffection of her body, at which

* This wifh of my friend was fulfilled in every particular.

I was obliged to be prefent, the cleareft proofs of it were vifible.*

The fituation of the Prince I am not able to defcribe to you. I trembled for his fafety; for when he faw the corpfe carried to the grave, he burft into a loud hyfterical laugh, and, as in a fit of madnefs, uttered expreffions that I never wifh to recollect.

Several days paffed, in which nothing remarkable happened. Biondello's accounts were always the fame, and the Marquis had not yet recovered from his indifpofition. We did not perceive that they were at all folicitous to difcover us, although, he affured us, that they had not yet given over the purfuit; and that our fafety depended

* He has already mentioned this in his laft letter. See the foregoing.

 upon

upon our remaining quiet; for their revenge would not be ſatisfied but by blood.

For want of room, I was obliged to ſleep in the Prince's apartment. It was about midnight when he came to my bedſide and waked me.

"Have you heard nothing?" ſaid he —I replied in the negative, for I had ſlept very ſound, my reſt having been broken the preceding night.

Has any thing happened to you, gracious ſir?

"Had I not the proof in my hands, I ſhould think it was a dream. It ſeems as if I am ſurrounded every where with inviſible beings.—I was juſt on the point of falling aſleep, when I was diſturbed by the moſt enchanting muſic. Whilſt

Whilſt I liſtened from whence the ſound came, a genius appeared to deſcend through the upper part of my bed, graced with all the charms with which our painters uſually repreſent them; but no pencil ever pourtrayed ſuch a perfection of irreſiſtible beauty. A ſoft light ſurrounded it, and illuminated my bed. I had drawn the curtain very cloſe. The night lamp burnt faintly, and on witneſſing this apparition, I reflected upon the former prophecy, which, alas! was ſo punctually fulfilled. I remained loſt in aſtoniſhment and fear. With a melodious voice it ſpoke to me:

"My lord and maſter ſends thee a letter; open and read it, but not before the firſt beam of the ſun announces day, and conquer all diſbelief!"——

" He let fall a letter, and melted, as it were, into a cloud, which vaniſhed by degrees. His diſappearance was accompanied with the ſame agreeable muſic as announced his approach, and a rich perfume diffuſed itſelf around me.

The Prince ſhewed me the letter. It was exactly like a common letter; only the ſeal conſiſted of ſeveral ſymbols, which we could not explain, and it was not directed. He put it into his pocket.

Will you not open it?

" To-morrow at the appointed hour."

You believe, then, in this apparition?

He was ſilent for a while.

" Muſt

"Muſt I not?—Oh! what would I give if I could but ſtill doubt it, and perſevere in that philoſophy, of which I boaſted ſo much! Now I muſt give up all. I believe now in every thing! Can I do otherwiſe, after what has happened to me?"

He ſlept no more that night, but converſed of ghoſts and ſupernatural appearances; and I ſoon experienced how much he inclined to believe in the poſſibility of them. At the appointed time he took the letter from his pocket, and, behold, there was a direction upon it! This, although a trifle, greatly aſtoniſhed the Prince; and you may eaſily conceive how he was affected at the moment. He opened it. It was a mere cover; but there was incloſed a receipt from Civitella, not only for the ſums which he had lent to the Prince, but alſo for the intereſt; and a

letter

letter from him, of which I will give you a copy; I tranſcribed it on account of its ſingularity:

"My gracious Prince!

"The enormity of my crime is ſo great, that I aſk of you forgiveneſs, and hope your heart will not deny it, as my repoſe and future happineſs depends upon it. You puniſhed my imprudence, at that unfortunate ball, by a ſevere blow; and I, like a madman, ſuffered myſelf to be overcome by rage, and thirſted for revenge. After the abominable cuſtom of this country, I begged of my uncle to hire a party of banditti to kill you—the ſaviour of my life. The thought oppreſſes me with horror; but you, who gave the wound, were alſo able to cure it, and could have done it by one word?—Oh! you, at whoſe command the higher powers wait, why do you fly from my weak

unpar-

unpardonable revenge, which you could have fuppreffed at pleafure?—Why did you fend me the fums of money, which I lent you with fuch fatisfaction, thus to deprive me of the confolation, which you at firft fo nobly gave me? Whilft you thought me worthy to fhare with you my fortune, you did not want it?—Oh! act with generofity and forgive me, for, without that, my recovery will be to me the moft unhappy period of my life. I cannot excufe my temerity; no, I am not able to do it—but you will be lefs indignant at my conduct, if you confider that it is by education alone fuch a deteftable felf-revenge can be juftified.

"Am I not by such appearances punifhed enough?—Alas! the recollection of it will never be rooted from my memory.

" As I lay upon my bed, ſuffering the moſt excruciating pain, and the by-ſtanders expecting my death every moment, there appeared to me a form, in a long black Tartar dreſs, and girded round the loins with a golden belt. It approached near to my bed: its white beard flowed upon its breaſt, and a penetrating frown ſat upon its brow: it looked around, and immediately my attendants ſunk to ſleep.

" Wretch!—It cried, with a terrible voice—who has ventured to perſecute him with vengeance, who could inſtantly deſtroy thy life, if he would make use of the power which he has in his hands?

" I will not repeat the dreadful remonſtrance, which I heard. It was a miracle that I did not expire under the agitation this appearance occaſioned.

Having

Having ſtruggled for some time in the moſt terrible torments, the form touched me. I was inſtantly free from pain, and perfectly recovered. Before me, on the table, were laying heaps of gold, for which I was obliged to give a receipt. It also deſired me to ask your pardon in writing, though I did not know where to addreſs you, and upon which my whole welfare would depend. Oh! do not refuse your compaſſion to a miſerable wretch.—

"When, and how, you will obtain this letter I do not know; but the ſpirit aſſured me that you would, for certain, have it.

"Alas, gracious Prince! return to me again. For, with ſincere repentance, an unworthy being will wait upon you in

in the anti-chamber of your hotel, as ſoon as day breaks.

" Your unworthy friend,

" CIVITELLA."

What we felt on reading that letter I need not, dear O . . . deſcribe to you. It was an event which filled us with aſtoniſhment. The Prince did not doubt the fact; but he would not quit his haunt, without firſt having made all poſſible inquiry as to its authenticity. Biondello, who was ſtill aſleep, was called, and commiſſioned to inquire very cautiouſly into every circumſtance. The voice immediately repeated,

" Overcome your diſbelief!"

Biondello croſſed himſelf, and went off. He did not go far from the convent, for he heard from his ſpies, that

we

we were perfectly ſafe; and he soon returned with this happy news. The Prince conjured us to be ſilent as to what had happened, and ſet off immediately.

We arrived at the hotel, and found not only Civitella but alſo the Cardinal, who came towards the Prince, and, in the humbleſt manner, aſked his pardon. That he forgave them willingly, and was highly ſatisfied to free himſelf from ſuch a dangerous dilemma, is eaſily to be imagined. Nor did he undeceive them as to the idea, that higher powers were at his command, and that the ghoſt had appeared to Civitella by his deſire; he only begged of them to keep it a ſecret. Civitella aſſured him that it was quite public, for the people who waited upon him knew it, and had already cried him up as a ſaint.

" But the people were afleep, how could they difcover the vifion ?" replied the Prince, with fome doubt.

Yes, gracious Prince, faid Civitella—but they faw the form defcending into the room, and witneffed, on their recovering from their terror, my reftoration. They faw me at the brink of the grave; and to be reftored so suddenly, must have excited their aftonifhment; and can you blame me, that in the moment when I found myfelf fnatched from the jaws of death. I called you, with gratitude, my benefactor?—— You did not prohibit me to do it; and had that been the cafe, I believe I fhould have violated your commands. Oh! moft gracious Prince! there is no greater pain than for an uncorrupted mind to fupprefs the feelings of a grateful heart!—He threw himfelf at the feet

of

of the Prince, whilſt tears burſt from his eyes.

"I have already forgiven you," ſaid the Prince, raiſing him from the ground.

But, am I beloved by you as formerly?—Am I not unworthy of it? He continued in tears.

"When I forgive, I do not do it by halves," ſaid the Prince, embracing him.

Life now seemed to beam afreſh in the Marquis. He did not even appear to have been at all ill, for he looked as healthy as ever; but a fixed melancholy, that was diſcernible in his countenance, extinguiſhed thoſe traces of benevolence which had formerly rendered him ſo attractive. But by this

this reconciliation he became quite the reverfe. Elated with his fuccefs, he ran through the room in an excefs of joy that indicated his happinefs. After the firft intoxication was over, he was overwhelmed, with an agreeable anxiety, which did not at all belong to his character, and from which one could perceive how much he felt his indifcretion. This, and the folicitude which originated with it, made him more agreeable to the Prince, and he became to him as dear as ever: he underftood the fmalleft hint; he fought to read in his eyes his moft diftant wifhes, and foon learned how to regulate his conduct according to his defires; befides, that he fufficiently underftood how to give his actions an air of duty, and continually exclaimed, how much he owed to the Prince. Believing that the Princes's violence upon the night of the ball was nothing more than a punifhment

niſhment for his extravagancies ;—for he did not conceive that the Prince had taken the lady that was with him for his Grecian ; he now altered his mode of life, and often thanked the Prince that he had puniſhed him ſo ſeverely. He declared that he was proud of it—that he eſteemed him higher than ever, and thought him more worthy of his friendſhip. He candidly confeſſed to me, that he had at that time entertained an idea, which would in the end have been his ruin. He had laid a plan to ſeduce the daughter of the . . . t . . io, a charming innocent girl of ſixteen. He had ſeen her, for the firſt time, at maſs, and her beauty impreſſed him with this reſolution.

To gain acceſs to the houſe of her parents, and to ſucceed in this diabolical ſcheme, he was obliged to court the favour of the ſame lady with whom

we had feen him at the ball; becaufe fhe was a near relation to the family, and could eafily introduce him.—The ftrictnefs with which fhe was watched, would have required him to commit a chain of crimes before he could have obtained his aim. His paffion was fo violent, that, united with his natural imprudence, he did not hefitate to adopt the moft impolite manners to accomplifh his purpofe. At the brink of the grave, he added, a man reflects upon all his actions in another point of view; and even thofe, that formerly gave him great pleafure, and upon which he had often fpoken with delight, pierced him to the very foul with horror.

Oh! deareft friend, Civitella is, notwithftanding all his licentioufnefs, a noble man, and, if he commits a fault, he knows how to compenfate for it, in

fuch

ſuch a manner, that one muſt attribute it to him as a great action. From his diſcourſe, and from his anſwers to my queſtions, I could diſtinctly perceive, that it was not him, but the Cardinal his uncle, who cauſed the banditti to purſue us ſo induſtriouſly; but he generouſly took all upon himſelf, and endeavoured to prevent us from diſcovering the truth! It is much to be lamented, that ſo ſuperior an underſtanding, with ſuch a good heart, and ſuch an enchanting appearance, muſt periſh upon a Venetian ſoil.*

It

* My friend here goes too far. Although the ſciences at Venice are in a bad ſtate, for want of encouragement, there, however, are open to an enquiring mind very conſiderable libraries, from which a man may gain a great deal of uſeful knowledge. But the caſe is, that they will not make uſe of them. And the young nobleman, who intends to fit himſelf for the ſervice of the ſtate, has to ſtudy hiſtory and politics; a few de-

It is a ſingular thing, conſidering the bad education which the children of the nobility receive, from the moſt ſtupid and rudeſt ſort of prieſts, called abbes, that he was ſo enlightened, or poſſeſſed of that ſenſibility, which gives to all his actions ſo much captivating intereſt.

I have neglected to mention, that curioſity induced us to aſk the Marquis to ſhew us the place where he had been wounded. He opened his ſhirt, and, to our great ſurprize, we perceived that there was not any appear-

partments, which, if they are filled up, require talents and induſtry, and are equally uſeful and neceſſary for thoſe whom their birth has deſtined for the government of the republic. Thus has my friend praiſed the talents of the Marquis; they ſeem, however, to me, to be more of a glittering nature than founded upon learning.

COUNT O...

ance

ance of a wound, or the ſmalleſt mark of any violence.

Continuation of Count O...

My friend exhauſted himſelf ſo much by his relation, that all the powers of nature ſeemed ſuſpended. My doubts were but too well founded; he appeared to ſleep, but it was that of death— My tears are ſacrificed to his memory! He was a man of fine ideas; but from the goodneſs of his heart, and an unſuſpecting diſpoſition, he became ſo much the eaſier a prey to his enemies, whoſe diſlike to him aroſe from his attachment to his maſter.

I was now left alone in a great city, poſſeſſed of no friend, to whom I could communicate my thoughts, and was obliged to take particular care not to talk with any one but upon common topics,

topics, becaufe I prefumed, and with reafon, that I was furrounded by fpies, who would put a falfe conftruction upon my words, and make that a plea for poifoning me. The death of my friend had made me cautious. His earneft requeft, that I would quit the place, and the meffage that the Prince fent to me by Biondello, now preyed upon my mind with double force; my forrow alfo contributed in a great meafure to aid my determination. I refolved to leave Venice. I locked myfelf up in my room for a few days, and then forfook a city in which I had loft two beloved friends. Before I went, I fent to the Prince a card of departure.

I had travelled about fixty Italian miles, when the idea that I might poffibly fave the Prince, obliged me to return. I was irrefiftibly compelled to act in this manner; for my mind, ever

anxious for his ſafety, repreſented to me in black colours all that might befall him; and I looked upon it as criminal not to endeavour to reſcue him. Fixed in this reſolution, I entered upon the execution of my plan, without once conſidering the dangers and difficulties which ſurrounded ſuch an undertaking. I took the precaution, however, for fear of being diſcovered, to diſmiſs my faithful ſervant, and the only one I had taken with me. I parted from him with deep regret; for he was the only one who had ſometimes, by his compaſſionate fidelity, afforded me conſolation. I was now obliged to go alone: but it was abſolutely neceſſary. He was an incomparable good ſervant; but he had one fault, which I could not break him of, although he had ſerved me twenty years, and which was in oppoſition to every principle of my ſcheme.—He

 could

could not keep a ſecret. What he knew, he publiſhed to the whole world, and, though he did not tell it in direct terms, his actions and behaviour betrayed it to every one he was acquainted with; if he thought well of them, and fancied they were poſſeſſed of the ſame goodneſs of heart as himſelf. It could not but happen that he was very often deceived, but this did not make him at all more prudent. To put unbounded confidence in every one was his maxim, from which he never departed; for he uſed to ſay, that he ſhould feel it ſeverely if he was ſuſpected by any one; and for that reaſon he thought it would be the ſame to others: and that the whole world truſted him he was convinced. He believed every one that was at all reſerved in his conduct, to be free from guile. If one expreſsly told him to be ſilent upon any ſubject, he became anxious not to let any thing

drop

drop that could betray him, which never failed to lead him into an error. For he had always in his mind, and at his tongue's end, what he ſhould not diſcover, and very often repeated to himſelf my prohibition; and it frequently happened that he acted thus in ſociety, and ſaid to himſelf, loud and ſignificantly, "Caſpar, don't forget that your maſter has told you ſo and ſo—" (and immediately mentioned the thing which he ought to have kept a ſecret,)—"you muſt not chatter out what he has prohibited you to mention."

He no ſooner heard that it was public, than he maintained firmly that he had told it to nobody.

This ſerious fault was, however, balanced by his other good qualities, which induced me to keep him. At

firft I thought of difmiffing him my fervice, as I was not accuftomed to put up with fuch conduct. I ufed to practife an artifice upon him, which fucceeded extremely well, as he was obliged to keep every thing he heard a fecret. I related to him, at the fame time, fomething that was unconnected with the fubject, and defired him particularly, not to mention it: by that means I deceived him, and the fubject I wifhed to be a fecret was forgotten.

I did not mention to him my determination refpecting him; but wrote a letter, and fent him forward with it, under the pretext of befpeaking quarters for me. He was obliged to deliver this letter to a landlord at * * *, with whom I had frequently lodged, and who knew him to be an honeft man. I requefted him to inform my fervant that I had thrown myfelf into a river. I inclofed

inclofed a bank-note, and commanded him to make the inn his home; begging of him, at the fame time, not to make any enquiries after me. To preferve appearances, and to give him an idea that it grieved me to part from him, I wrote an affectionate farewell-letter to him, and begged of him again to fulfil my laft and particular requeft.

Poor Cafpar's cafe was extremely hard; but I was under the neceffity of treating him in that manner. Had I told him that I was obliged to part with him, on account of my intention to travel privately, he would have fought me every where, and would have enquired of every body, whether they had feen or heard any thing of me; my hiding place, by that means, would have been difcovered, and my death the certain confequence. I was convinced that he would punctually fulfil

my laſt requeſt, and it would be very eaſy for me to find him again when I wanted him. I begged of him to be comforted; that he would not commit ſuicide I was convinced; for the reſpect which he had for the laſt requeſt of a deceaſed friend was uncommonly great.

I hope my readers will pardon this digreſſion; Caſpar was my faithful ſervant, and deſerves more than this poor tribute for his gratitude!

After heſitating a conſiderable time, (ſuſpicious, probably of my intention) Caſpar ſeparated from me. With the greateſt emotion I looked after him until he diſappeared. I was now left alone. Quite undetermined which road I ſhould take, I departed for . ro . . On the day of my arrival, I heard that, in the evening, there was to be a maſquerade-ball; and a thought ſtruck me,

which I immediately put in execution. I bought the habit of a Poliſh Jew, ornamented my chin with a large beard, coloured my eyebrows and face, and wandered thus towards Venice. The goods which I was poſſeſſed of, and my horſe, I turned into money, and ſecreted it, with ſome jewels in my belt. I did not doubt my ability to play my character faithfully; for I had been a long while in Poland, and had dealt with the Jews; inclination too, partly, as well as neceſſity, induced me to learn their language, in which I was ſo well ſkilled, that I have, even by the Jews themſelves, been taken for one of their tribe. I travelled the greateſt part of the way on foot, and about twenty miles from Venice entered an inn, where I met poor Caſpar. He was ſitting in a corner of the room, and ſeemed totally abſorbed in thought. I was anxious to avoid being ſeen by

 him,

him, and, for that reafon, was about abfenting myfelf from the room, when he came towards me, and afked me from whence I came? This made me bolder, and I told him the place where I had paffed the night before. The word was fcarcely out of my mouth, when he enquired if I had not feen his mafter? No, I anfwered quickly, and reflected afterwards, how unthinkingly it was done; becaufe it gave him to underftand that both of them were known to me. But it did not ftrike Cafpar in the fame way, and this *no* induced him to fit near to me, and to relate, with the moft heart-felt forrow, the hiftory of his mafter. I reminded him to fulfil the laft requeft of his benefactor, and heard, to my aftonifhment, that he did not think me dead. I immediately invented a ftory which convinced him of the fact. He departed early the next day, and promifed me that he would faithfully

faithfully obferve my requeft. He took an affectionate leave of me, without knowing who I was, which convinced me that I might live at Venice in fecurity; for I hoped to render the Prince fervices of great confequence.

Before I arrived at Venice, I met with an accident, which had great influence on my conduct. I ftopped towards night-fall at an inn, which ftood by the road fide. I found there a Polifh Jew, who was at the point of death. He no fooner beheld me, than he addreffed himfelf to me, and in a few minutes we entered into converfation, in which the greateft confidence was difplayed. By my compaffion, and the little fervice which I rendered him, I at laft gained his utmoft confidence. His illnefs increafed; there was no hopes of his recovery. When we were alone, he called me to his bedfide, and

I experienced what aſtoniſhed me beyond deſcription.

" I ſhall depart," he ſaid, " very ſoon to Paradiſe, there to repoſe in the laps of Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob; but I have ſomething of great importance, which I cannot carry with me. You have gained my confidence, and for that reaſon, I ſhall deliver it to you."—I was obliged to ſwear that I would punctually perform all he required; at the ſame time, he aſſured me, that I ſhould be very generouſly recompenſed for it. He went on—

" The . . . an confederates have ſent me with a letter,"—(I was obliged to take it from the lining of his cap,) " inſtead of me, do you deliver it."

How great was my aſtoniſhment, when I heard the Armenian deſcribed

from

from head to foot! He did not know who he was; but he told me the place where he was to be found, at certain hours, ſo that I could not poſſibly miſtake him; he gave me, beſides, a ſign, which was unknown to any one elſe, and the anſwer of the Armenian would clearly prove him the perſon. He mentioned, with the greateſt care, every particular ſeveral times, that I might not err. Although I did not want this precaution, I ſeemed to be very attentive to what he ſaid, that he might not ſuſpect that I had any knowledge of the Armenian. I experienced by the . . . an buſineſs a great ſupport to my plan; for I was anxious that they ſhould think me the real meſſenger, and not ſuppoſe that this man had merely ſent me. I conſidered I ſhould, on that account, be truſted with greater confidence.

It was, for the firſt time in my life, that I wiſhed for the death of a fellow creature; but I certainly did in this inſtance; for I counted upon what I knew already, and believed for certain, that I ſhould ſave the Prince, as ſoon as I could light upon the Armenian; and this would all have been fruſtrated if the Jew had lived!

He died the following day. I performed, according to his requeſt, the laſt ſervice, and departed the next day. The letter I ſecreted in my cap. My heart beat with joy, and I offered up my thanks to heaven for its favour. I thought I ſhould never reach the place of my deſtination.

I arrived, at laſt, in Venice; my heart palpitated. I took lodgings in a remote part of the city, at a ſmall inn. Before I arrived there, however, I was very

very much alarmed. As I ſtepped into a boat, I beheld Biondello in the ſame. I was fearful of being diſcovered, becauſe I could not truſt to my diſguiſe, as there were ſo many ſly fellows in the city; although I avoided being detected by Caſpar, (who knew me ſo well.) But if a man ſtudies to avoid being known, the more he acts his part, the ſooner he is likely to betray himſelf. I was influenced by this conſideration, and therefore put a good countenance upon the matter. Biondello patted my ſhoulder, and gave me diſtinctly to underſtand, that my preſence was very dear to him. I might have given him ſome ſuſpicion, if he had not diſembarraſſed me, by enquiring ſomething of . . . I anſwered him, that he muſt obſerve, I had made ſecrecy my rule of conduct. Inſtead of being angry with me for ſuch a reply, he was very ſatisfied with it. This

peculiar

peculiar conduct was very myſterious, but by degrees it cleared itſelf up.

To my great ſatisfaction I learned from him, that they were informed of my death, and believed it; for he aſked me if they had found my corpſe? I replied in the negative; alledging that it was impoſſible, on account of the ice that floated down the river—that I confirmed the report, every one will readily believe.

As ſoon as I arrived in the room which I had hired at the inn, I bolted the door, and opened the letter. The taſk was very difficult to perform; but I tried a variety of ways, and, at laſt, ſucceeded.

To my great diſappointment it was written in characters, and perfectly unintelligible. I made, however, ſeveral attempts

attempts to underſtand them, but in vain. I therefore copied them very exactly, in hopes, at ſome future time, to find the key to them. I cloſed the letter again, ſo that no traces of my having opened it could be perceived, and appeared the following day, at the appointed time, in St. Mark's Place. It was in the beginning of January; it was crouded with characteriſtic maſks*

* I give this note for the information of thoſe of my readers, who are unacquainted with the manners and cuſtoms of Venice. The characteriſtic masks are in Venice cuſtomary, from the time of the three kings, or wiſe men of the Eaſt, till the great feaſt day, which is the moſt lively in the whole year. All the ſtreets and ſquares are, at that time, full of masks, and principally the St. Mark's Place. They repreſent all ſorts of characters, nations, manners, and cuſtoms. Thoſe who ſpeak, entertain themſelves with every one who will talk with them; they perſonate faithfully their adopted character, and being ſometimes men of wit, afford great entertainment. You frequently ſee amongſt them the *Improviſatori*, who are a kind of poets, famous for impromptu's.

and ſpectators, who were enjoying the entertainment. I did not mix with them; I was upon the watch for the Armenian. I preſſed often through the croud, and ſought him in every corner, but he was not to be found. I reſolved to wait until night, and then return again to the appointed place upon the *Broglio,* cloſe to the church. The firſt perſon whom I ſaw was the Prince. He was in a domino, but his maſk, which I knew, as well as his appearance betrayed him. He ſtood before a pillar, upon which were a great many characters, and near him a maſk dreſſed like a magician. The latter had a long white beard that deſcended to his belt, to which was attached a black rope, apparently as a ſymbol of his profeſſion. In his right hand he held a ſtick, with which he pointed to the pillar, and ſeemed to explain ſomething to the Prince, who liſtened very attentively. My curioſity prompted

ed me to approach nearer, but it was ufelefs, for they fpoke fo low that, in the tumult, no perfon could hear a fingle word. The magician, at laft, turned round and difcovered me. I thought that he played his character for mere pleafure, and was entertaining the Prince with his tricks, but I was greatly miftaken. The more I reflected upon this event, the more I was convinced that it was defigned for fome particular purpofe. The magician went leifurely away. I had made it always a rule to notice the fmalleft circumftance that concerned the Prince, and therefore followed him immediately: but he difappeared, and I faw the Armenian coming towards me. I gave him the fign and he anfwered it, bidding me, at the fame time, follow him. I complied, and he conducted me into a dark ftreet. He there unlocked the door of a houfe and we went together

into

into a ſmall room. He took the letter from me, and overlooking it ſlightly, ſeemed to be ſatisfied with its contents. He put ſeveral queſtions to me on account of the . . . buſineſs, which I anſwered ſo, that I did not give the leaſt cauſe to ſuſpect me. He deſired me to meet him again the next evening. He had parted from me, when he returned back, and addreſſed me in the Venetian language; he had before ſpoken, to my great aſtoniſhment, in . . . language. My genius aſſiſted me, I ſhook my head, and told him, in . . . language, that I did not underſtand him. He ſmiled, and ſaid he had forgotten himſelf. He was willing to remind me once more, not to miſtake the appointed hour the next evening. I promiſed him that I would not, and he went away. This circumſtance made me ſtill more cautious, and I maintained my character ſo well, that, when I quitted

ted it it became very difficult for me not to uſe the tone and manners of a Poliſh Jew.

The time, until the hour arrived, paſſed very ſlow; at laſt it was announced by a neighbouring clock, and I went immediately to the appointed place. I found the Armenian there, who haſtily conducted me to a boat. Before we quitted it I was blindfolded, and when the bandage was taken from my eyes—gueſs my aſtoniſhment and terror!—for I found myſelf in the ſame hall where I had witneſſed the frightful appearances I have before mentioned.* It was exactly the ſame, but I thought the aſſembly were more numerous. The hall was ſplendidly illuminated. The horror with which I recognized the fatal chamber was very viſible; for one of

* See Vol. I. page 17.

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the aſſembly (by his ſpeech, I gueſs it muſt have been the Armenian, for, as they all appeared maſked, it was impoſſible to diſcover them,) told me to have courage. They ſaid alſo, in the Venetian language, that a Jew was a ſingular animal, for he bluſhed at every thing but what related to traffic.

The company took their ſeats at a long table, covered with black cloth. One of them ſeated himſelf at a little table, upon which there were pens, ink, and papers. He was probably the ſecretary of the ſociety; for he queſtioned me very minutely reſpecting the letter of . . . and to every circumſtance that was at all connected with it, and wrote down all my anſwers to his queſtions. I could eaſily gueſs by this, how much their ſucceſs depended upon my anſwers; for he read them over to me, adviſing me, at the ſame time, to

alter

alter what did not appear to me perfectly correct. I was too well prepared to drop any thing that might betray me; I had likewife time enough, as I was queftioned by an interpreter, (I believe it was the Armenian himfelf,) to think of the beft anfwers. They were perfectly fatisfied with me, and gave me a confiderable prefent. The fecretary paid it to me. I do not know how it happened, but his mafk fell from his face. He endeavoured to put it on again as quick as poffible, but I already had feen that it was—Biondello. The accident feemed to operate very forcibly upon the other members.

"This circumftance," faid they, "muft now coft the poor Jew his life, to enfure our fafety; for in fuch cafes as thefe we cannot depend upon honour."

Damned principle! I thought, as the ſweat poured down my forehead. I had ſufficiently reſolution left to affect not to underſtand what was ſaid; for my attention was, to all appearance, directed to the money I had received. I heard their debates with apparent indifference, although they became ſo violent, that they did not at all regard me. The queſtion was, whether they ſhould murder me or not. It was utterly impoſſible for them to underſtand each other, the tumult was ſo great. The Armenian, who had remained quiet for ſome time, now gave a ſign with his hand, and there enſued immediately a deadly ſilence.—This would have convinced me, had I not gueſſed it before, that he was the leader of this ſecret ſociety. After a ſhort pauſe, he began:—

"To

"To provide for our ſafety, is our firſt and ſacred duty. To maintain it, no ſacrifice would be too great; but I cannot conſent, on this occaſion, to put a man to death whoſe ſervices have been ſo eſſential to us.—I might ſay, and with juſtice, that it would militate againſt our plans, and deſtroy that which we have ſo carefully cheriſhed."

He pauſed—but no one anſwered him. I became more compoſed. He proceeded.

"And why ſhould we kill him?—becauſe he ſaw one (pointing to Biondello) unmaſked!—Is he not in ſome meaſure a party concerned, and would it be poſſible for him, were this not the caſe, in the city of Venice, among ſo many thouſand people, to find out one ſingle perſon, whom he had but

juſt glanced upon?—I moreover maintain, that the love of money, which is ſo natural to his nation, prevented his taking his eyes from the table. Our mere dreſs, without the maſk, is ſufficient to deceive any one who has not ſeen us in our ordinary habits."

They all agreed with him. Biondello did not, perhaps, recollect, that I had already ſeen and ſpoken to him in the boat; at leaſt he would not mention it; or he might, perhaps, think I did not know him again. But to be certain of the fact, the Armenian aſked me if I ſhould be able to recognize the gentleman again, whom I ſaw a few minutes ago unmaſked? He put the queſtion to me in ſuch an inſinuating manner, that many would have anſwered—yes, to give them an idea of their powers for diſcrimination; but I knew too well how the buſineſs ſtood. I there-

fore made my anſwers accordingly. I affected not to know any thing of the matter; and, as I examined the money, I innocently aſked, what they particularly wiſhed me to do?

"See," ſaid the Armenian, "I am not miſtaken; he has not ſeen him!—He ſeemed to me too ſtupid to be a hypocrite, or to think of any thing but what leads to his intereſt."

Several of the others made the ſame obſervation, and ſeemed to regret, that they had not choſen a cleverer fellow to tranſact their buſineſs?

"Thoſe who have ſent him," (anſwered the Armenian) were prudent enough to ſee, that a taſk which did not require brilliant talents to execute, would have been faithfully and conſcientiouſly performed by him; and indeed

there is not fo much treachery to be looked for in men, that only know what they fee, as in many others"

Stupid people are always the moft honeft, added a fat gentleman, (who probably could not boaft of his abilities,) and laughed at this impromptu fo much, that the table, on which his belly refted, was very near falling down.

I was difmiffed, after they had inquired my place of abode, and commanded me to remain there for further inftructions. They conducted me again blindfolded to the canal. My joy, when I found myfelf alone and fafe, I need not defcribe; but the dreadful words, that they thought my death the only means of fecurity, ftill refounded in my ears.

A whole

A whole month elapſed, in which I did not advance a ſtep nearer to the completion of my purpoſe, notwithſtanding my activity. My dreſs, and the promiſe which I had made to the Armenian, (and by which I hoped to make ſome important diſcoveries) became now the greateſt trouble to me; for it prevented me from inſtituting thoſe enquiries which were neceſſary to aid my plans. It was impoſſible for me, as I was ſo ſourrounded by ſpies, to learn any thing that at all concerned the Prince, without the greateſt hazard. From what I had heard and ſeen in the ſecret ſociety, I could only conjecture what they intended to do with the Prince; but it was impoſſible for me, an individual, to deſtroy the fabric, which was built and guarded by ſo many.—I was continually reflecting upon theſe circumſtances, which perplexed me very much. My ſleep alſo

was interrupted by the moſt frightful dreams, and was more fatiguing than refreſhing. My imagination often pictured to me the Prince falling from a precipice. I caught him by his cloak, but it ſeemed to rend into a thouſand pieces, and I ſaw him daſhed upon the ground. I ſaw him ſtruggling in a rapid ſtream; I ran to his aſſiſtance, and was drowned with him. I carried him from a conflagration, and believed we were ſafe, when the flames ſuddenly ſurrounded us, and we were conſumed. In ſhort, the moſt horrible images, which my diſturbed mind created, totally deprived me of my reſt, and, I muſt confeſs, my weakneſs made an impreſſion upon me the next day, that was not eaſily to be eradicated; although I had very little faith in dreams*.

I was

* I hope that no one of my readers will laugh at the Count O . . .'s weakneſs, which he himſelf

I was ſitting one day (it was in the beginning of February, 17..) in my room, wrapt in reflection. The weather was very gloomy: flakes of ſnow, intermixed with rain beat againſt my window, as the wind howled round the houſe. I did not quit my room the whole day. A gentle rap at the door at laſt, rouſed me from my lethargy, and before I could ſpeak, I ſaw a man ſtanding before me with a ſhew-box upon his back. He aſked me if I did not chooſe to ſee his raree-ſhow? and without waiting for my anſwer, he ſet his apparatus before me. To get rid of him quickly, I gave him a piece of money, accompanied with a polite aſſurance, that I had no deſire to ſee his raree-ſhew. I thought he would

ſelf ſo ſincerely confeſſes. If I had obſerved this beforehand, I ſhould have left out this little appendix, though I made it my duty to deliver every thing to the public as I have found it.

 depart

depart immediately, but I was very much miſtaken. He firſt looked at me and then the money. At laſt he ſaid,

"I never had ſo much given me before," and returned me the money.

"You muſt have made a miſtake!"

I ſtarted. I found I had given him, in my hurry, a ſmall gold piece—certainly too great a preſent for my ſituation. He obſerved my embarraſſment.

"Take the money back again," ſaid he, "I will not profit by your error."

I did ſo; though I would readily have given it to him, through the fear of his being a ſpy. At that time the ſmalleſt circumſtances were to me of conſequence, and which I ſhould not formerly have troubled myſelf about.—

I gave

I gave him a ſmaller piece. He thank-ed me, but entreated me very much to look into his box. To get rid of him, I was obliged to comply with his requeſt. He opened it, and I imme-diately ſtarted back—I beheld ſeveral ſcenes of the Prince's life, (which could be known only to a very few perſons,) ſo accurately repreſented, that he who had a knowledge of them, could not but recollect them. I looked ſignifi-cantly at the man, he diſregarded me, and begged of me to ſee the other.—My aſtoniſhment now roſe to the high-eſt degree. I ſaw the figure of a Poliſh Jew, which exactly reſembled me, with the following words under it, "The Count O . . . as a Poliſh Jew."—I loſt all my patience. In an angry manner I puſhed the box from me;—

"Are the agents of hell to be found every where?" I exclaimed, and ſtamp-ed upon the ground.

"Not every where," ſaid the ſhew-man, as he graſped me by the hand.

"Who are you?" I cried, ſtarting with confuſion.

"Will you deſert your friend?

I ſtood for a moment ſpeechleſs. He drew a handkerchief from his pocket, and wiped his face.

"Do you not know your friend Seymour?"

It was him. My joy bordered upon frenzy. At a time, when I believed myſelf abandoned by all, when I could not even whiſper my ſentiments, for fear of being overheard and diſcovered, I found a friend, who had ever deſerved my veneration and love. No one that has not been in the ſame ſituation, can poſſibly have

have an idea of my fenfations. Every misfortune operated upon me with double force, becaufe I had no friend to whom I could communicate my fufferings. Now I was in poffeffion of that valuable treafure, and preffed him with affection to my heart. After the firft burft of tranfport was over, I begged of him to relate to me the caufe which brought him hither, and what could have induced him to leave his native country?—That he never would really have followed the trade of a fhewman, was very clear to me.

"I wifhed," he began, "as you will remember, to return to England. I travelled through Paris; and an accident obliged me to make a longer ftay there than I at firft intended. Several unforefeen events reduced my finances, and I was obliged, until new remittances arrived, to defift from purfuing

my journey. In the mean time, I reſorted to all the public places of diverſion. I went one evening into a numerous ſociety. The bottle circulated briſkly, and the converſation became very agreeable.—At laſt a juggler came into the room, and begged to entertain us with his tricks.

"If they are worthy to be ſeen," ſaid a noble ſpark, "the ſociety will perhaps indulge you."

"To prove that they are, I will ſhew you a ſpecimen," continued he, "and let your own judgment determine, whether I ſhall proceed or not."—He performed ſome that were not common, and which excited our admiration.

The ſociety unanimouſly deſired him to go on, and every new trick he produced, procured him freſh applauſe.

That

That he was an Engliſhman I immediately perceived by his accent, which made me attentive to him. It ſeemed to me, that his features were not unknown to me; but I could not immediately recollect who he was. Under the pretext, that I wiſhed to learn ſome of his tricks, and to countenance a countryman, I aſked him to call on me next morning, and to take his breakfaſt with me. He came, and in a little time I diſcovered, that I had been intimately acquainted with him from a boy. His name was Johnſon. My joy on this occaſion, was equal to yours, when you diſcovered me. I had been educated with him. His father had been tutor at my father's. His talents, and chearful heart, had acquired him the patronage of my father, and he ſuffered him to be my playfellow, and conſtant companion. All the privileges that I enjoyed, were alſo be-

ſtowed

ſtowed upon him; he was inſtructed by the ſame maſters, and dreſſed as I was. I could not ſhew in my whole wardrobe a ſingle thing, which he did not alſo poſſeſs, and frequently, I obſerved, that he excelled me. Being the only child, the tender love of my mother, (who was dead) had ſomewhat ſpoiled me, and I very often told the ſervants, haughtily, that I was the only heir to a large fortune. My prudent father employed this method, to ſhew me diſtinctly, that from merit alone our character muſt be eſtimated; and he gained his point by that means ſooner than he would have done by moralizing. I was at firſt angry with him, and hated Johnſon; but this did not laſt long, for, on account of his polite and good conduct, he acquired the eſteem of the whole family; and, by his ſincere love for me, I ſoon was conſcious of his good qualities. We became the beſt

of

of friends, and endeavoured to excell each other in affection. He discovered a talent for mechanics. As I did not suffer him to eclipse me in any thing, I also applied myself to the art; but, by his industry and perseverance, he soon excelled me in that science: I also was not so much interested with it as himself. My father let us want for nothing. He hired masters who gave us the best instructions. The most expensive instruments were also procured, and Johnson soon finished a variety of curious things. From thence he went on farther. A genius like his, was not satisfied with continuing in a beaten tract; he had a desire always to see and study something new. Mathematics, which we had often read with our tutor, who was a very clever and expert man, had discovered to him several departments of knowledge, which he now wished to acquire. He made sun-dials, he manu-

manufactured optical glaffes, befides electrical machines, and never failed to execute any thing that appeared worthy of his attention. To be brief, (for I fee clearly that the recollection of my paft days, and the qualities of my friend, have made me rather too loquacious,) he became foon fo expert and ingenious, that he often, although a boy of fourteen years, was the object of admiration; and, on that account, he was called the little Jack of all trades. He went on thus till he attained his twenty-fecond year, when he, with great induftry, applied himfelf to chemiftry; in which he foon made many new and ufeful difcoveries. About that time my father died, and he loft a friend who had never let him want for any thing, but gratified his wifhes at any expence. He now determined to travel. All my perfuafions to detain him were fruitlefs. He ftood firm to his

his intention, and I could not even obtain a permiffion to travel with him. He even refufed the confiderable legacy which my father had left him. At that I became angry, for I willingly would have fhared with him my whole fortune, which he knew perfectly well; but I could not prevent him from executing his purpofe. He would not even accept any money from me.

"Well then, you may go," faid I, and embraced him with unfeigned forrow.

It is impoffible for me to difcover what it was that induced him to defert the man, who had acted towards him like a brother, and for whom he had the greateft regard.—I was not able to guefs it. A letter which I, fhortly after his departure, received from him, has difcovered it to me. After a long apology

logy for his conduct, he ſays: "that it was impoſſible for him to live any longer upon the bounty of his friends." He conſidered my father's generoſity as an act of charity—but it was a wrong idea. "He, however, would endeavour to ſupport himſelf. The death of my father cauſed him to reflect upon circumſtances that never ſtruck him before. He would not have a ſecond benefactor, that he might not miſs him; and wiſhed not to expoſe himſelf to the danger of loſing his ſupport, when it had become impoſſible for him to exiſt without it. And if even he had not that to fear, he ſhould be deficient in his duty, if he expected that from another which he was able to procure for himſelf."—He added many other things; but this is ſufficient to give you an idea of a man, who will ſoon acquire your eſteem; of one who rather choſe to wander in the world, than

than to enjoy that reſt and affluence which he could not procure by his genius. I will not detain you longer with his hiſtory, though it is very remarkable. You will be pleaſed more, if you hear it from himſelf, and I am confident he will excite your admiration and reſpect.*

The days which we ſpent together at Paris were exceedingly agreeable. We related our hiſtories to each other, which indeed afforded a great fund of entertainment; for, ſince I received that letter, I had not either ſeen or heard from him. He ſaid, that he had written ſeveral times to me, but as I

* He has indeed afterwards related to Count O . . . his hiſtory, which alſo came to my hands with theſe papers. It is very remarkable; and, ſhould I again have any leiſure time, and my readers have a deſire for it, I will publiſh it.

SCHILLER.

never

never obtained the letters, I could not anſwer them.

I related to him the events which happened to me at Venice with the Prince . . . After I had finiſhed, he ſuddenly jumped from his ſeat, and ran up and down the room, as if influenced by ſome extraordinary idea.

" We ſhall ſave him !" he exclaimed.—

" What, the Prince ?"—

" Yes, the Prince !" he replied firmly.

How will that be poſſible ?

" My dear friend ! don't reflect upon that at preſent ; it wants but one deſperate attempt. I ſee the poſſibility of the

the meafure. Judging from what I have heard, there is fomething ferious at the bottom of thefe tricks. Let us deftroy the plans of malice, which will perhaps be the ruin of many thoufands, before they come to maturity."

Suppofe they have in view fomething more than cheating him of his money, do you not believe, that many are at work, and that refiftance would be madnefs?

"Undoubtedly, open refiftance—but let us work againft them where they do not fufpect us, and in a way, that they cannot perceive the machine, but only experience the effect of its operation. This, my friend we certainly are able to undertake. I am too well acquainted with the deceitful tricks in this world, which are publifhed as wonders; and if I can do nothing more than

than merely chace away the miſt from the eyes of the Prince, I may, perhaps, ſave him from being enveloped in their diabolical ſnares."

This propoſition was ſo noble, that, although it may prove fruitleſs, I conſented to it. When my remittances arrived, we made the beſt of our way to Italy. A trifling indiſpoſition, which affected my friend, retarded our journey for a little time. Johnſon requeſted I would diſmiſs my ſervants, and retain only one ſingle footman, who was ſufficiently faithful and prudent, not to diſcover any of our plans.

Johnſon diſguiſed himſelf and us ſo, that we were quite unknown; a precaution which was very neceſſary.— He alſo obſerved, that in our mean dreſs, we ſhould be able to make more obſervations than otherwiſe, for he main-

maintained, that they were lefs fufpicious of the poor than the great. We took lodgings feparately, at different inns, to have a more ample field for the execution of our plans; we even went fo far as to have feveral lodging-houfes, in which we alternately refided, having firft changed our dreffes, and concealed our country, for we all fpoke different languages with equal promptitude. By that means, dear O . . ., I fucceeded in difcovering you, notwithftanding your difguife."

"But how was that poffible?" faid I, interrupting him.

"You betrayed yourfelf," he replied: "I lodged in the fame inn that you did, and, by accident, was put into the room over your's. If I awoke in the night, I conftantly heard fome one fpeaking in your chamber. This made

me attentive. I laid myſelf upon the floor of the room, and overheard, through a crack, all that you ſaid. I ſoon perceived that you was talking in your ſleep. You muſt have been diſturbed very much by frightful dreams; for your exclamations were generally—Murder! Deſpair! Periſh! Down! Down!—Several times I heard you mention the name of the Prince, and this induced me to preſume that you were the man, whom I had ſuch a great deſire to ſee. I overheard you for ſeveral nights, and was at laſt confirmed in my opinion; for you ſpoke of things which no other perſon but yourſelf could poſſibly know. Has he not ſimilar views with us, ſaid I; knowing as I do, that he was ſuch a truſty friend of the Prince, and loved him ſo much? Is he not endeavouring to be uſeful to the Prince in that diſguiſe; becauſe he has rendered

dered it impoſſible, by undeſerved treatment, to appear in his true form.

What!—exclaimed I, full of admiration—You have been told, then, how the Prince has treated me?

More than that, he anſwered. You ſhall ſoon be convinced from Johnſon's letters, which I will communicate to you hereafter, and then went on—

However, I did not think proper to diſcover myſelf to you, as Lord Seymour, until I was fully convinced of the fact.

I was ſuſpicious, although it was improbable, that you were a ſpy in that diſguiſe for the purpoſe of betraying me: I was, therefore, obliged to act with the greateſt precaution. For

that reaſon I appeared in the character of a ſhew-man.

I had drawn, ſome time back, for my amuſement, thoſe ſcenes which I diſplayed to you, and it immediately ſtruck me that they would be uſeful to me in this inſtance.

Leſt I ſhould be deceived, which muſt have appeared in your conduct, I kept back your portrait until the laſt, which inſtantly gave me to underſtand, that I was not wrong in my conjectures.

We were ſome time, ſaid Lord Seymour, without being able to accompliſh any of our plans, in ſpite of the greateſt exertions. Every evening we met together, and communicated to each other our diſcoveries, and planned what meaſures we were to take in

in future. But, although we thought ourſelves adepts at invention, we never could, by any ſtratagem, approach the Prince.

"A good idea muſt be executed, though it may be founded on a bad principle," ſaid Johnſon, "or all our undertakings will avail nothing, and our aſſiſtance probably arrive too late." For that reaſon he wrote a note to the Prince, in which he invited him to appear alone, at the dead of the night, in a certain ſolitary place. He conveyed it, unperceived, into the Prince's pocket. He had written it ſo artfully, that the Prince, no doubt, preſumed it came from the Armenian. The deſire he had to be farther acquainted with this myſterious being, from whom he had heard nothing for ſome time, made us certain that he would not refuſe this invitation. We were not deceived;

he came. We hired two fellows to attack him, and came paſt as it were by accident. Johnſon was to run to his aſſiſtance. For appearance ſake, he ſtruggled with them, until they ran away at a noiſe made by myſelf and Mathias. Johnſon conducted the Prince home, and we went, as quick as poſſible, to our lodging*.

The ſucceſs of this event you will find in Johnſon's letters to me. They were ſent, to avoid all intercourſe with him, by a faithful waterman, to whom Johnſon delivered them for me, and by that means he alſo obtained my anſwers.

* I have omitted inſerting this event before, which my friend, the Baron F . . ., in his relation, has ſlightly mentioned, becauſe I thought this the beſt place for it.

COUNT O . . .

And

And thoſe letters, added the Count O . . . I will communicate to the reader from Lord Seymour, from a French tranſlation, which he made at my requeſt, as I did not underſtand the Engliſh language.

I have only omitted that which the public is already acquainted with from the preceding pages.

Here the thread will be again united, which the death of my friend ſeparated.

LETTER I.

JOHNSON TO LORD SEYMOUR.

September 17, **

I AM not able to recover myſelf from what I may juſtly call my extravagant happineſs. Friend, rejoice with me—All has ſucceded to my utmoſt wiſhes, and I look forward with pleaſure to the time when the Prince will be freed from his enemies. My whole plan is fixed upon, and although every thing appears in confuſion, I hope, however, that time will produce the deſired effect. I pity the Prince from my heart. I ſoon diſcovered how he was ſituated. He has a good underſtanding, and an excellent heart; and ſhame to them who have ſo induſtriouſly laboured to ſpoil both.

But why do I communicate to you things which you know already better than myfelf? You may judge of the degree in which my happinefs made me quite abfent.

I fhall be obliged to act with more caution in future. My plans were on the point of being deftroyed; for Biondello came fuddenly into my room as I was writing. It was fortunate that I heard him approaching: I had juft time enough to fecrete all my papers, and walk with indifference towards the window. He did not feem to take any notice of me, but took his hat and cloak and went out, probably, upon fome of the Prince's errands.

But I will now tell you every thing that appears to me of confequence, that I may not again be interrupted;

it would be impoſſible for me to connect my whole train of thoughts.

I conducted the Prince home, as you already know, under the pretext of protecting him. He permitted me to do it without heſitation; for he did not ſeem to have recovered from his fright, into which the circumſtance of meeting two ruffians, inſtead of the Armenian, had thrown him. He did not ſpeak until we entered his room. He then introduced me to one of his barons and Biondello, who were in the ſame room, as the ſaviour of his life. He thanked me heartily, and told me to aſk of him any favour.—I conſidered for ſome time, and at laſt told him, that he would ſhew me the higheſt mark of friendſhip, if he would keep me in his ſervice; for I had ſometime ago loſt my maſter, and had endeavoured, in vain, to get a new one. I gave myſelf

myſelf out for an Engliſhman of a good family; I told him that my eldeſt brother, during my minority, ſpent my fortune, and forced me to the neceſſity of ſeeking for ſubſiſtence in the humiliating capacity of a ſervant. By the laſt part of my ſtory, I hoped to excite his pity towards me; for I am confident that we feel always more compaſſion for thoſe who are reduced from affluence to poverty, than for ſuch as from their birth are accuſtomed to ſervitude. If he ſympathiſed with me, I could very ſoon claim his confidence. In that point I ſucceeded to my ſatisfaction in a ſhort time. But what I am rejoiced at moſt is, that he has made me his chamberlain; in which ſituation I ſhall often have an opportunity of being alone with him. He would not, he ſaid, degrade the ſaviour of his life by a livery; and regretted only, that it was not at preſent entirely in his

power to make me independent of the world.

As chamberlain, I am to have a ſmall room to myſelf; but this is not yet quite ready. Biondello has permitted me, for that time, to make uſe of his. He is very friendly towards me; and, although I acknowledge his civility for appearance ſake, yet I do not truſt him; for he has ſo much flattery and cunning about him, that I fear he has very little honeſty left.

Several days after.

THANK God, I am in poſſeſſion of my little room, and begin to write to you again, which was till now impoſſible for me to do, Biondello watched me ſo narrowly. I muſt not attribute that to the Prince, becauſe he is never miſtruſtful. Yet I will not

judge harſhly. I have not yet converſed with the Prince; but as my cloaths are not come from the tailor's, I will aſcribe it to that circumſtance; but if when I am equipped he ſhuns me, I muſt conclude that there is ſomething more at the bottom of it.

One day later.

THIS morning, early, I obtained at laſt my dreſs; and you are not able to imagine with what apparent rapture I put them on. Biondello was preſent, and gave me joy, on my exchanging my old cloaths for ſuch rich ones. But whilſt I rejoiced to think how I had ſucceeded, he believed it aroſe from a childiſh love of finery, and this, I have no doubt, made him aſſure me that they fitted me extremely well. I let him enjoy his error, and to confirm his opinion, I took every part into my hands,

hands, and contemplated it with a foolifh pride, fmiled at myfelf in the glafs, and neglected nothing that could convey to him the idea of my being a ftupid clown. To make the joke complete, I told him, that I intended now to take a walk, to fhew myfelf to the people, which I had not courage to do in my old coat. I intend, by that manœuvre, to fend you my firft letter, and I am forry if you have been at all embarraffed on my account.

LETTER II.

JOHNSON TO LORD SEYMOUR.

October 1,

BIONDELLO is the moſt cunning fox in the world; but I have, in ſpite of his ingenuity, deceived him. By the confidence which he ſeems to put in me, he watches me ſo cloſely, that if I had not taken great care, I ſhould certainly have betrayed myſelf; but I have at laſt made him believe that I am a perfect unſuſpecting blockhead, and indeed it is the opinion that I wiſh him to have of me, in my preſent ſituation. He ſtudied to find out in me more than I choſe to let him know; and the trouble he gave himſelf to accompliſh this, is a ſure proof that in him there is ſomething more than the mere ſecretary of the Prince. The

Prince

Prince has a very high opinion of him. He does not conſider him as his ſervant, but his truſty friend. I pretended not to underſtand a word of the Venetian language (and Biondello thinks he is quite ſure of it, for he has tried many experiments to prove the fact), and all thoſe who do not ſpeak Engliſh, I converſe with in French; they are not at all ſuſpicious of me, but often talk about things when I am preſent, which, if they knew I underſtood them, they would certainly conceal from me. As they look upon me to be of no conſequence in oppoſition to their ſchemes, and the Prince likes me to be about his perſon, I now conſtantly attend him, and he enjoys the advantage, as he ſuppoſes, of not being obliged to ſend me out of the room if he is converſing with any one, which he is always obliged to do with his

other

other ſervants, as they underſtand the language.

Laſt night, as I was undreſſing him in his room, Biondello was preſent. After converſing upon ſome indifferent topics, they began about me. Biondello thought my qualities were ſtupidity, ſincerity, and honeſty. The Prince ſaid that he was pleaſed with my perſon, and thought the qualities Biondello ſpoke of were better than good intellects, united with a bad heart.

" He is alſo courageous," ſaid he, " and to that I owe my life, at leaſt my freedom."—

Biondello underſtood this hint. He altered his tone immediately; for, at firſt, he was very ſatirical. He might have forgotten himſelf. He now talked a great deal about me, and ſaid many hand-

handſome things of me to flatter the Prince. From that they turned to the ſubject of the attack made upon the Prince, and cracked their brains for a long time to diſcover the perſon who hired the bravos to murder him. That the note did not come from the Armenian, Biondello maintained, for it was not likely, that if he meant to attempt the Prince's life, he would execute his plans with ſuch temerity. The Prince agreed with him, and the only doubt then remaining was, who could poſſibly have views upon his perſon, if it was not him, who had already given him to underſtand ſo. Biondello pointed out to him the poſſibility, that his own court had done it to lay hold of him. It immediately ſtruck the Prince ſo forcibly, that he broke out into a moſt violent paſſion. It is true all circumſtances united, ſerve to ſtrengthen this ſuppoſition; for I learned by the con-

converſation, that the Prince had lately received a very rigorous letter from thence; and Biondello reminded him of the converſation which paſſed at St. George.* This circumſtance apparently confirmed the fact in the Prince's mind. His expreſſions I will not repeat here. I do not know if I am wrong, but it ſeemed to me as if Biondello was pleaſed with the idea, that the Prince deſpiſed his court: for he knew the kind of language that would increaſe the Prince's anger, without letting him ſuſpect his cunning. This man poſſeſſes dexterity ſufficient to guide any perſon where he pleaſes, without his being able to perceive the thread with which he leads him. He ſometimes appears quite different to that which you would ſuſpect. Towards me he did not always act with ſuch

* See the preceding part of this Vol. page 43.

precaution; for that reafon I difcovered more of his character than I otherwife could have done. He had ftrict orders from that hour to have his wits about him, and alfo to intercept the letters of Baron F . . . (a cavalier of the Prince's houfehold) to Count O . . . to fee if they would lead to any thing fatisfactory.

"For," added the Prince, "this F . . . feemed fome time back diffatisfied with my continuing here."

What this will lead to, I am not able to fee at prefent. I wifh I could but give a hint to Baron F . . . to be upon his guard, for if Biondello confpires againft him, he muft fall a facrifice to his plans.

Several

Several days after.

BIONDELLO every day puts more and more confidence in me, and it is, in all probability, becauſe I communicate to him, with the greateſt accuracy, all that I hear and ſee; but you'll underſtand, I tell him only thoſe things which he ought to know.—I ſeem to keep no ſecret from him. He often liſtens with the greateſt patience to the ridiculous nonſenſe with which I endeavour to entertain him; and he generally compliments me upon my talents, and good conduct in truſting to him with ſuch ſincerity. Indeed, the method I have taken is the beſt way to inſure his countenance. But he is miſtaken in my character, notwithſtanding the accurate knowledge he poſſeſſes of mankind. In every converſation I diſtinguiſh more and more what an opinion

opinion he has of me; indeed he begins to give me little commiſſions, but which at preſent do not conſiſt of any thing farther than to have a watchful eye, in his abſence, upon the Prince's conduct, and to communicate to him all what I have perceived and heard. And, to enable me to do this effectually, he takes care that every little new trait in my character is reported in a favourable manner to the Prince, who becomes every day more and more attached to me, and prefers me to all his other ſervants; indeed he has of late appeared very ſuſpicious of them, which is, in all probability, a contrivance of Biondello's, in whom he puts the moſt unlimitted confidence.

That I ſhould ſucceed ſo well, and in ſo ſhort a time, I did not imagine; it exceeds my moſt ſanguine expectations. I will ſet it down as one of my

great maſter-pieces of art, if I am able to outwit this Biondello.

A certain Marquis, by name Civitella, has juſt left the Prince. I have often ſeen him here. I queſtion whether he ſeeks any thing beyond the honour of the Prince's friendſhip. They ſeem very intimately acquainted, and indeed I cannot blame the Prince for that; for this Marquis has many good qualities, and ſeems to ſtudy to diſplay them to advantage in the preſence of the Prince. However, I have heard the Prince many times promiſe to pay him money; and, from what I could collect, it is not a ſmall ſum.—Then the Prince is in debt—it cannot be otherwiſe, from his preſent extravagance.—But how are they to be paid, when I know, for certain, that he receives nothing from his court? Is not this a diabolical plan of the Armenian,

to detain him, and ſucceed in his deſigns upon him? I adviſe you, friend, to provide yourſelf with money, which may be had immediately upon your orders. I leave it entirely to your prudence, how you will accompliſh this neceſſary object without betraying yourſelf.

I muſt tell you of a diſcovery which I have juſt made, and which I think of conſequence:—The Prince generally goes out towards evening, and this happens very often; and, to day I hear, he belongs to a certain ſociety, called the Bucentauro. Could you not learn ſomething about this ſect; and whether we muſt alſo direct our attention to that. He was ſcarcely gone, when I haſtened to my room to write to you. I had juſt finiſhed the laſt line as Biondello came in. I muſt tell you that he does not ſuſpect any thing when

when he finds me engaged in writing. I have told him that I have a great delight in making verſes, and on that account I have always a poem lying at my ſide, which, as ſoon as I hear any perſon coming, I put in the place of the letter; and, to play my part well, I affect to tranſlate it to him, (for he does not underſtand Engliſh) and repeat the moſt ſtupid nonſenſe with a kind of poetic mania. This time he had not a deſire to hear my poetry, but intreated me to defer reading it to a future opportunity, and go with him to his room; ſo that he might be preſent when the Prince arrived. This I did, and I was obliged to report to him all that had happened to the Prince during his abſence. When we were in the height of our converſation, there came into the room an old man. He was bent low beneath his years; but there was an expreſſion in his countenance

which ill accorded with his age. His voice alfo was full and regular, and he had not that trembling pronunciation which generally affects aged people. Biondello told me that he was his relation. I was going to abfent myfelf, but he entreated me to ftay; as his coufin, he faid, did not underftand any other language than the Venetian, and as, befides, he had nothing of confequence to communicate to him. The old man looked at me with fufpicion, but I bufied myfelf with a book, and took no notice of him.

"Do you know for certain that he does not underftand us?" faid he. "Are you fure that he is not an impoftor?"

Biondello told him he need not be under any apprehenfion.—He defcribed my character to him, and faid, that in fpite

ſpite of my ſtupidity he could make me of ſervice to him.

"I will believe you," he exclaimed, "for I am acquainted with your talent in the knowledge of mankind, and which makes you worthy of your dangerous employment. The greater part of the fabric, which I have curiouſly raiſed, reſts upon your ſhoulders. Do not looſe, for heaven's ſake, at the moment of its accompliſhment, that firmneſs which will prevent our being buried in the ruins. I know your caution and foreſight are very great. Think alſo on the reward you will gain, when we behold your giant work completed. I expect letters from . . . and we are then at the ſummit of our wiſhes; for the Prince will not make any reſiſtance."

" The journey then, which you undertook, has been of great ſervice?"

" Is there any thing impoſſible? Had I not found great difficulties in perſuading the Court of . . d . . to agree in our plans, the mountains, which now appear before us, ſhould long ago have diſappeared. I did not miſtruſt you, believe me. Though it were ſo, I ſhould forgive you; for how could you be able to penetrate into my ſchemes?— You believed that many things were the effect of chance, which I contrived and put into execution.—Can you ſuppoſe that the Prince of . . d . . came to Venice for nothing?"

" No one can poſſibly imagine what ſteps your prudence takes."

" You muſt know then, that he came hither at my requeſt, to entice

our

our Prince to a licentious manner of living, and to bring him, by that means, nearer to the point on which my plans are centered."

"Pardon me, when you could ſo eaſily have communicated with the Court upon the conduct of the Prince, why was that journey neceſſary?"

"Is it not eaſier to remove a Prince from the place where it is likely his penetrating eyes would have pried into our deſigns, than to make thouſands privy to our plans. I had only to write to the Prince to come, for we had ſettled it ſome time ago.—I knew he was a member of the order of . . . I am one of them. I wrote to the ſuperiors of the order, and they contrived to ſend meſſages to him, which made him believe he was invited to ſee the internal part of the ſanctuary."

"I am aſtoniſhed! As often as I ſee you, you always appear to me in a new and extraordinary character: hear then farther. The ſecond ſtep was not difficult for me to take. The Count P . . . is firſt miniſter at the Court of . . d . . For appearance ſake, the feeble King wears the crown, but P . . . governs: he is the machine by which every thing is regulated. This P . . . has long been my friend. I was acquainted with him whilſt he was ambaſſador at Rome, and I propoſed him for a member of the order of . . . At that time the ſketch of the plan, which we are now about to execute, was ſhewn to him, and which was always the ſame, although accident has changed the perſons by whom it was to have been accompliſhed. I wrote to him that every thing was ready, and we waited for him only to complete it. Nothing was eaſier for him, than to perſuade his avaricious monarch

monarch to let out his troops to conquer . . . to which his council had long before directed their attention. P . . . met me at . i . . to bring me the happy account of his succefs, and the King fufpected that he was gone to conclude a promifed alliance."

"Do I dream?—Is it poffible to play thus with Kings?" replied Biondello.

"I did not expect fuch a queftion from you," faid the old man. "Do you not know, that one may deceive Kings much eafier than other people; becaufe flattery fucceeds to a miracle with them; fpreading, as it were, a mift before their eyes? And if they are prudent enough to difregard that illufion, we muft then give them amufements to which they are attached, and never deprive them of any thing, but

what relates to ſtate affairs, for fear of incurring their diſpleaſure*."

"And does not the King of . . d . . know for what purpoſe he lends his powers?"

"Is the architect obliged to explain his whole deſign to a maſon, who is employed to place ſtones and execute the work, which probably he would not even then underſtand? He works for his daily bread, and if he obtains that, he is ſatisfied.—Can the King of . . d . . deſire more, than the

* I have written every thing down as I found it, and I do not know how far this may be true. But, if I may ſpeak my opinion, it does not appear to me quite certain; for, I have ſeen in my life but one King, and he ſeemed to me ſo full of wiſdom and majeſty, (probably the old King of P . . ., Fr. II.) that I would have ſworn that his very looks would have awed thoſe that dared to inſult him.

acqui-

acquiſition of . . which muſt be of great value to him, as it is immediately connected with his own territories?—It is the object which he ſets his heart upon.—However, to ſatisfy your curioſity would take up that time in which I hope to hear more important accounts of the Prince."

Biondello replied: "Every thing is in the ſame ſtate as when you left us; and I have only here and there added a little where it ſeemed neceſſary." Here Biondello related to him the event of that evening in which the Prince was attacked, and concluded with ſaying, that he had made uſe of that circumſtance to enrage the Prince more againſt his Court; for he made him believe, it was certain, that the Court intended to impriſon him.

The old man ſeemed ſatisfied with that, and immediately replied, "How is he as to his manner of thinking?"

"He approaches more and more to a free-thinker," replied Biondello, "and I am confident but little is wanting to render him ſuch entirely."

"Then," ſaid the old man, "my machines act as ſucceſsfully as I can wiſh."

"How! was this alſo your work? Will a free-thinker believe in apparitions? Will he bend his neck to the yoke of a religion which puts reſtraint on him, and which it is your opinion he will accept?"

"I ſee you are very little acquainted with the human heart. To ſhake a belief, which fundamentally reſts upon

con-

conviction, is very difficult; but to guide the opinion of a ſceptic is ſufficiently eaſy. This may ſeem a paradox, but I will prove it to you:—Man—let him wear a crown, or the rags of a beggar—wants always a ſupport in trying circumſtances; and if he deſpairs at all, he ſighs after comfort with double anxiety. And what offers to him the wiſhed-for conſolation but religion?—Hence, it is evident, that the religions of thoſe nations who are ſtill, as it may be ſaid, in a ſtate of ignorance, have infinitely more ceremonies than thoſe that are enlightened. The Prince rejected this ſupport, and launched boldly into the gulph of ſophiſtry. The more he meditates upon it, the more it will perplex him. As he ſinks beneath inquiry, he will greedily devour any new idea that tends to diſſipate the former. And is not the Catholic religion, in which there are

ſo many ſaints that he cannot doubt his preſervation, exactly calculated for the purpoſe ?"

" How ! Do I hear right ? Did you not extol the principles of doubt, and yet you called ſcepticiſm a tottering fabric ? Have you alſo been converted, and have you found a greater conſolation in contemplating the ſcapulary, than in your former rational way of thinking ? Why do you let appearances ſo often deceive you ?—Is not the tool that is uſed by the mechanic for the moſt curious purpoſes, when placed in the hand of a child, a dangerous inſtrument, with which it innocently wounds itſelf ? Does not ſolid food affect the feeble ſtomach, whilſt it operates not upon a ſtrong one ? And will not a child throw from it the inſtrument with which it has wounded itſelf, whilſt the artiſt would not ſell it for any price ?—

Will

Will not the perſon of a weak ſtomach, avoid food that is diſagreeable to it, whilſt the hungry healthy man enjoys it? But I will argue otherwiſe.—What is belief, and what is diſbelief? Does not the Mahometan think that his belief is founded upon principle and authority, and call the Chriſtian an unbeliever; whilſt the latter thinks the ſame of him? Hence then, we may conclude, that belief depends merely upon conviction, the want of which diſbelief.—This is ſelf-evident."

"You think, then, a fundamental belief is that of which we feel convinced, and alſo that men may entertain different opinions upon the ſame ſubject, and yet be called believers."

"They both undoubtedly think that they are ſo."

"Is

" Is not that an argument againſt you?—If the Prince thinks that his belief is fundamental.—"

" Then it would be difficult to wean him from it, but he does not think ſo?"

" And yet he adheres to it with firmneſs, and defends his opinion with the greateſt warmth."

" Let me aſk you one queſtion:—Does conviction always carry with it tranquility of mind?"

" I thought that they were inſeparable."

" And do you find it with the Prince? Have you not often told me, that, when free from diſſipation, he was diſſatisfied with himſelf? He is like a child who is pleaſed with the brightneſs

of

of a knife, which he throws away as ſoon as he is hurt by it; he is the invalid whoſe ſtomach cannot digeſt heavy food; who guards againſt it as ſoon as he perceives the evil; and then, in order to rid himſelf as ſoon as poſſible of his former diſorder, adopts a lighter diet as neceſſary. The Prince thinks that many of thoſe things are beneath his notice, which men ſeize upon with ſo much eagerneſs, and from which continual reflection, and an unbiaſſed mind alone can deliver us. And I declare to you, that in a ſhort time, he will believe in ſpirits and apparitions. I do not know him; I do not know the human heart, if his former bigotted ideas of religion do not return with double force. Muſt not this conſequence obtrude itſelf upon him as ſoon as his experience teaches him that apparitions do exiſt; that his preſent philoſophy could not once make

him

him disbelieve this, which is the most trifling and unimportant point that a man can doubt of. Would it not much less be able to eradicate that idea from his mind which education, custom, and our own partiality, have concurred to proclaim by an internal voice? Will he not pass from professed free-thinking to the contrary extreme, and thank the man who leads him to it?"

Biondello was silent, and appeared perfectly convinced. The old man rose slowly from his arm chair; Biondello then told him something which I was not able to understand distinctly; but I learned that he was to prepare the machines; for, the day after to-morrow, there was to be a grand feast.

Well, friend, what do you think of this conversation? The least that we can infer from it is, that Biondello is con-

concerned in the plot againſt the Prince. Who can poſſibly be that old man?—Is it not merely the gaſconade, which is always peculiar to thoſe ſort of people, becauſe they by that method keep their underlings (of whom, in all probability, Biondello is one) in an aſtoniſhing dread of their power. So that I know not what to think of his making uſe of the . . d . .   for the execution of his plan. And for what purpoſe was this employed? How can it have any reference to the Prince? How does this all agree with . . ?—Ha! I have a thought—What if they intend to create the Prince, King of . . . ?—Perhaps this may be the intention of the Court of . . d . .—I muſt confeſs ſincerely, that, at preſent, all is a perfect myſtery to me.

LET-

LETTER III.

JOHNSON TO LORD SEYMOUR.

October the 4th.

THE Prince is invited to-morrow to a feaſt, which is given in St. Benedetto, and, as I underſtand, merely on his account. His whole houſehold (except one) will be preſent! and who this one ſhould be, is a matter of great diſpute. The lot will probably fall to Biondello, becauſe he has pretended for ſome time to be indiſpoſed. I call it a pretence, becauſe, in my preſence, he does not appear ſo, at leaſt leſs than when the Prince is preſent. He will, perhaps, as ſoon as we are gone, employ his time in the preparation of the machines, of which the old man ſpoke. His pretended indiſpoſition prevents ſuſpicion, and makes it more probable.

And

And may it not be poſſible that this banquet is the idea of the old man? I ſhall have a watchful eye upon him, and, if poſſible, will remain at home.

October the 5th.

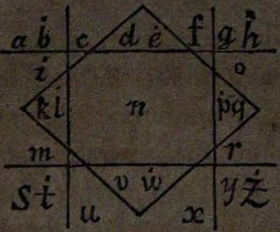
I KNOW not what to make of the Prince to-day. He roſe very early, looks pale and haggered, but ſtudiouſly ſeeks to hide it; and is diſſatisfied if we appear to obſerve it. It is the ſame with Baron F . . and Biondello. They are all ſilent, but the Prince laughs at them; yet I can obſerve that his mind is not eaſy.—Perhaps he has ſeen an apparition. It is probable, although I cannot diſcover the truth*.

* The reader knows it already by the relation of Baron F . . and for that reaſon I omit the reſt here.

Annot. of the Count O . . .

The

The whole houſe are gone to St. Benedetto, and I am the only inhabitant in this large building. A freezing horror ſurrounds me. My character, as I informed you, was miſtaken by Biondello, and he begged of the Prince to accompany him. I am glad he is not here; for his careleſſneſs has thrown into my hands his pocket-book filled with letters. He left it in his great-coat pocket. It contains, to all appearance, nothing of conſequence, but I will not omit to ſecure any thing that, perhaps, at a future period, may be of great importance. I thought I ſhould diſcover ſomething more when I found it, but I was deceived, for there were only ſome little ſongs, poems, and love-letters. I was about to return it to its place, when I reſolved to ranſack it once more, and behold I diſcovered a ſecret pocket; in which there was the following figure:—



It appeared to me to be the key to ſome private writing, that may one day or other fall into our hands, and that you will take particular care of it I am confident.

Several of the Prince's houſehold are returned, and in great conſternation. It is ſaid the Prince has killed the Marquis Civitella, and is fled. The reaſon for this raſh act I know not. God only knows how this unfortunate affair will end!

THE

THE CONTINUATION OF COUNT O...

AS ſoon as I had read this, the letter which the Jew gave me for the Armenian came into my mind. I ſought it, and found that the figure was indeed the key to the hieroglyphics. I haſtened immediately to Lord Seymour, to inform him of this acquiſition. We ſat ourſelves down, and, with that key, very eaſily unravelled the whole. And to gratify the curioſity of the reader, I ſhall give the contents of the letter, and join the key to it in the tranſlation.

— — — — — — —

— — et omnia ſunt, quae
poſtulaſtis parata, nil
plane adhuc deficit.
et — — — — — —
** insky est gregis dux,
conſtantiſſimus vir for-
tiſſimusque, nostris ab
omnibus amatus, Cont,en-
tus est promiſſionibus
veſtris, et optat quam
maxime princeps *** cus
ut fieret rex noſter ſic
uti et nos omnes.

*Statim, si religionis romano-catholicae est membrum, & regimen ***æ accepit, pro nostro etiam habebimus domino, & unum solummodo verbum tunc satisfaciet, ut fiat re vera, & nos — —*.*

* The remaining characters which the letter contained I omit, because by those already transcribed, the views of the Count O . . . are explained. I shall also here subjoin the English translation.

Note of the German Edition.

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" All that you desired is prepared to the greatest nicety, and . . . . . . inski is chief of the party; a man of great firmness and valour, who is beloved by all. He is satisfied with your promises, and wishes, as we all do, very much that the . . . Prince may become our King. As soon as he has embraced the Roman Catholic religion, and has obtained the . . . crown, we shall immediately look upon him as our regent, and one single word will then be sufficient to make him our sovereign, and us - - - - - - - - - -

Our

Our ſurpriſe at the contents was beyond conception—the execution of the ſcheme depending merely upon one word too. And what will be the conſequence if the Prince ſhould be King of . . . ? The old man ſaid himſelf, that theſe were the only means to accompliſh the plan—and what could that plan be?—No other than that which would ſhake monarchies to their foundation, or totally ſubvert them. And if the Prince ſhould obtain the crown of . . . what would happen—Is there not beſides him a ſucceſſor? Now I perfectly underſtand the ſignification of theſe words, "Wiſh yourſelf ſucceſs Prince, he is dead." I now perfectly recollect with what emphaſis the Prince repeated thoſe words. (As F . . has written to me) I was ſeized with horror.

"Friend," ſaid I to Lord Seymour, "let us not proceed in this buſineſs—what are

are we againſt ſo many; how ſhall we be able to ſwim againſt the ſtream?"

"We will do it as long as our powers laſt," he anſwered me, reſolutely?"

"Suppoſe they are detected, and we are involved in the danger?"

"Then we ſhall have the ſatisfaction of knowing that we have done all that we poſſibly could do, which will ſweeten our hours, whether breathed out in a priſon or a palace."

"But is it poſſible, that he can have that conſolation, who throws himſelf through caprice into danger?"

"We are not in that ſituation.—When the lives of thouſands, or at leaſt their happineſs, is at ſtake, no danger

is too great to brave, if there is any probability of ſucceeding."

"And is this the caſe?

"It is."

"How, friend, can you effectually ſubvert power? Can you hinder a band of rebels from leading away the thoughts of the Prince, when they are attracted by force? Has he not already done what they at . . . deſired him to do? Will not every action now become eaſy to him, when he conſiders that he can receive forgiveneſs of his ſins after every wicked deed?"

"Friend, you do not conſider that if our plans fail, there is ſtill one left? Have you no idea of the power of the ſtate inquiſition here? If we diſcover only half of what we have heard to

be

be true, every thing is loſt. Will they not fear, and with juſtice, that in that ſecret ſociety are alſo manufactured plans againſt the republic; and that they wiſh the Prince to aſſiſt them in the execution of their ſchemes? You muſt conſider alſo, that we cannot be detected if we inform through the *Bocche Parlanti**.

"But what will become of the Prince? Gracious Heaven!—If we ſhould be the

* Theſe *Bocche Parlanti* are large lions jaws, of marble; there are many of them to be ſeen in the Palace of St. Mark. All ſecret denunciations are put in them, and over every one is written the kind of accuſation which you are to deliver. The State Inquiſitors examine them every evening, and take into conſideration the letters they find in them. By that means it is eaſy to remain unknown; for he who expects a recompenſe for his information, detains a piece of it to ſhew it.

means of forcing the ſword of juſtice to be drawn againſt him."

"The Prince is excuſable—whatever he has done, his rank will be taken into conſideration. Puniſhment is not inflicted with that ſeverity upon men of high birth, as it is upon the meaner claſs of mankind. But let the worſt come—Is it not better that *one* man, even though a Prince—ſhould die for the people, than that multitudes ſhould periſh on his account?—And though the mine in its exploſion ſhould even ſhatter us with the reſt, from our aſhes there will ſpring flowers which muſt make future generations revere our memory."

Every one of my objections made the Engliſhman more firm; and I was at laſt convinced that he was right, although I ſuffered much in the encounter. I ſuppreſſed my tears with the

hope

hope of a better iſſue to our plan than that which we ſuppoſed; and ſought, as much as I could, to perſuade myſelf of its being practicable, though I acknowledged the feeble foundation upon which it reſted. I truſted principally to Johnſon's prudence, which was evinced in a great degree by his letters.—With the greateſt anxiety I haſtened to my lodgings, and read the following letters written by him. Two of them I have omitted entirely, as they did not contain any thing but what has already been related. And if I found in the others what I wiſhed for, the reader will eaſily diſcover it.

LETTER VI.

JOHNSON TO LORD SEYMOUR.

October the 25th.

SINCE the events which have of late happened to the Prince, he is quite changed. He flies the focieties which he formerly fought.—He locks himfelf up in his room, and appears gloomy and melancholy. I do not wonder at this; but it has taken too ftrong a hold of him, for I am fearful that he fhould lay violent hands on himfelf.—Would you fuppofe that, under the pretence of being ill, he has fent away the Marquis, who fhews fo much tender care for him, and is devoted to the completion of his happinefs, and who was a little while ago his moft intimate friend, And will you believe me when I tell you, that Biondello is not

not now ſo frequently about his perſon, and that his love for ſolitude is equal to his maſter's. Neceſſary as this might be under other circumſtances, it now makes me more anxious for him. He has ſo entirely ſeparated himſelf from the world, that he ſeems cold even to his boſom friends: a ſtate of mind by which ſuicide muſt be encouraged, and leſs reſolution be required to commit it. That this is already the caſe with him, I experienced laſt night. I was alone with him in his room. This happens now very often; for, as ſoon as it grows dark, he does not like to be alone, he therefore obliges me to be with him, as he believes he can vent his ſorrows in my preſence, without my being able to underſtand him, and that I cannot, from ſtupidity, learn any thing from his geſtures. This dread of being alone in the evening, which he was before not accuſtomed to, gives

me (befides the advantage of obferving him,) hopes that he may, perhaps, even yet, adopt other fentiments; for, in my opinion, folitude by candle-light muft rather ftrengthen than alter fuch a refolution. And I think, that as long as one yet fears fomething, or which is the fame thing, thinks one has fomething to lofe, let it be ever fo trifling, which one would not willingly be deprived of, the ties are not entirely fevered which unite us to this mortal life.

Now to the bufinefs.—I was alone with him one evening, when he refted his head upon his hand, and fat for fome time almoft without animation. He fighed deeply, and lamented that he had ever been born. At laft he rofe, and opening his writing-defk, took out of it a red ribbon. He preffed it to his heart and lips. Oh! that

I were

I were able to defcribe his look. It pierced me to the heart—I will give you, to the beft of my recollection, his foliloquy.

"Oh! thou only remains of my beloved Therefa!" (the name of the Greek lady). He preffed the ribbon to his lips, as the tears burft from his eyes. The ftrefs which he laid upon thefe words, and his deep forrow almoft deprived me of my fenfes. I never faw a man in fuch a terrible fituation. His eyes were wildly expreffive, and his voice hollow and monotonous. I believed his feelings had almoft driven him to infanity. The burthen feemed too heavy for his foul to bear. He remained for fome time fixed like a ftatue:—at laft he fpoke.

"My Therefa! my all! my .... Ah! how can this miferable earth afford any relief to my fufferings!—

this pitiable ſtate which cannot produce one ſingle being who is perfectly happy. Which could murder a Thereſa! — an angel! — murder! — murder! — murder!" — (This he ſpoke with dreadful agitation) — "Ha! what prevents me from breaking the bands which ſeparate me from her? — Who can blame the lion that burſts the chains which deprive him of his liberty, and which ſeparates him from his young? But can I find her again! Irrecoverably loſt! Irrecoverably! I would ſeek her through the world, but ſhe is irrecoverably loſt! What would I now give for the ſweet ideas of eternity, which conſole ſo many under their afflictions! What would I not ſacrifice, if I knew for a certainty, that man had ſtill a farther deſtination after his death. I would endure the painful torments of hell, could I hope by that to recover my Thereſa. Why was a form ſo beautiful,

tiful, created to be the food of worms, that prey indiſcriminately upon the works of nature?—Oh! thou that dwelleſt beyond the ſtars, if thou exiſteſt, reſtore her to me again, and I will believe in thee!!—Ha! what is that? What thoughts prey upon my mind? —Shall I then never more forget her? Will ſhe be always united to every idea?—Wilt thou—eternal Being!—give me a hint of thy exiſtence?—Oh! what a ſea of doubts and uncertainty! Who can ſave me from it?—I ſhake like a reed, which the wind will break. But I will not wait for it—I will prevent it.—I will attain the truth—I will draw back the curtain which hides her from my ſight!"

He walked up and down in the room in violent agitation—He did not ſeem to regard me at all. His eyes glanced upon the ribbon, which he

held

held faſt in his hand. He ſtarted with ſurpriſe. It was green.

"What is this?"—he exclaimed—"Will you tear from me this alſo, ye inviſible powers? I am, perhaps, ſtill to be happy?—Ah!—Ah!—Happy!—(after a pauſe).—But I have it ſtill—It is, perhaps, the dear ſhade of my Thereſa that is near me, and will adminiſter comfort to my heart—Hope! Oh! without thee there is no comfort left!"

You ſee, dear Seymour, that he believed the change of the colour was a miracle. If I had dared, it would not have been a difficult taſk for me to unravel the myſtery; for, when I conſider that Biondello has a falſe key to the bu eau, the change is eaſily explained; and ſhould we not ſuſpect ſuch a man of every thing? It was very late, and the Prince did not ſeem diſpoſed

to

to retire to reſt.—His mind ſtill dwelt upon his beloved.—His ſoliloquy was a ſtrange mixture of belief and doubt, and both were apparent equally.

"Yes, it will, it muſt be ſo; with the thread of life, will alſo be deſtroyed my piercing torments!" He had ſcarcely finiſhed the laſt word, when Biondello ruſhed into the room, and threw himſelf at the Prince's feet.—Alarm and terror were expreſſive in his countenance, his eyes ſeemed ſtarting from his head, his hair was diſhevelled, and he was half dreſſed. "Alas, my gracious Prince!" he at laſt cried, with a tremulous voice, and preſſed himſelf cloſer to him.—The Prince was quite embarraſſed, and ſaid not a word.

"Pardon, pardon, gracious Prince!" exclaimed Biondello again.

"Are you mad, Biondello?" ſaid the Prince. "Why do you aſk my pardon? What have you committed?"

"It would be well if I were mad. —Alas, my gracious, my beloved maſter!"

The Prince had great difficulty to bring him to his ſenſes. At laſt he ſucceeded, and then related his reaſon for this ſtrange conduct; after having entreated once more his pardon for what he ſhould relate. The Prince granted it, and he at laſt began:

"Since your highneſs has devoted your hours to ſolitude, I have led a moſt miſerable life. It is the more painful to me, when I conſider that I have loſt your affection. It ſeemed I was no longer worthy of it, nor of the happineſs to be with you, gracious Prince!

Prince!—I did not perceive in you any traits of your former humiliation; but, in its place, I beheld your countenance ſhadowed by melancholy. I queſtioned myſelf from what this could proceed.—I doubted whether, from the effect of the apparitions, or the great loſſes you had ſuſtained. But you did not reflect upon them at the moment;—it was from mature deliberation, and when there was nothing to be feared. Sudden and violent ſorrow is ſeldom of long duration; but that which comes after it is ſo much the more dangerous, as it takes deeper root, and deprives us of that conſolation which we in general treaſure up for ourſelves. Anxiety for you, gracious Prince, oppreſſed my ſoul, diſturbed me during the day, and chaſed away ſlumber from my eyes.—I had ſcarcely laid myſelf down, and offered up a prayer to my Saviour, and all the ſaints, that they might take you

you under their protection, when on a sudden I thought I saw a light. I opened my eyes, but I was obliged to shut them immediately. A figure stood before me in the midst of splendor, which blinded me. I could not on that account open them again.—With an agreeable, yet thrilling voice, it spoke as follows:—"Thy master is big with thought, which is supported by his disbelief. He means to fly by suicide into futurity, for which he is not yet prepared. I dared not to appear to him myself. Tell him this, and warn him of the consequences of so rash an act."

The Prince turned pale, seized Biondello by the collar—"Impostor," he exclaimed, with a fearful voice, "you have overheard me!"—Senseless he fell upon the ground. I hastened to his assistance; but the Prince prevented me,

me, and dragged him to an arm-chair. His look was ghaſtly. It was a long time before he could recover himſelf, in ſpite of our endeavours. But as ſoon as he opened his eyes, he threw himſelf again at the feet of the Prince, and begged pardon, that he was obliged to ſay what he did. The Prince repented his intemperance.

"It is the effect of imagination, Biondello," ſaid he to him; "go to bed. To-morrow I will ſend a phyſician to you. I forgive your conduct, becauſe it ſhews your love for me. Be compoſed on my account, and go to bed."

"I have not dreamed, gracious ſir, and my fancy has not at all deceived me.—Behold here is the proof of it."—He put ſomething into the hand of the Prince, who looked at it with aſtoniſhment. "Yes,

" Yes, it is," he exclaimed, " It is the ring of my Therefa, which I gave her on her birth day.—Oh what a day of happinefs was that to me!—But how came it into thy hands? How is that poffible?—She took it with her into her grave, I faw it myfelf!"

" The fpirit gave it to me."—" Here," faid he, after having uttered thofe dreadful words, " carry this to your mafter, and tell him that patience and refignation will be his beft guide."—" He difappeared, and I haftened hither."

" Hope and patience conduct us to the end which we defire!—What is this!—If fhe—It cannot be her—"

At this moment there was a great knocking at our gate; it was opened, and the Marquis Civitella came in.—His

His drefs, as alfo his countenance, indicated the greateft embarraffment: from his eyes flafhed anxiety and fear. He haftened immediately into the Prince's room; and when he faw him he feemed to be more tranquil.—Can you guefs, friend, for what purpofe he came hither at fuch an unufual time?—He had feen the fame apparition as Biondello had; every word was the fame, only that he did not obtain the ring, which the Prince had forced, with great difficulty upon his finger. It is therefore but too true, that he alfo belongs to the party, and that all this is an invention. I cannot doubt it for a moment. If I were not already a little prepared for their plans, they would have deceived me, fo mafterly did they act their parts. And I muft give myfelf credit, that I looked upon all this for deceit, and not for fact, fo great was their deception. Judge yourfelf, by

by that, if it was poſſible for the Prince to doubt a moment on the ſubject, and the ring—from whence they obtained that I ſhould like to know. As far as I can learn, the Greek lady is buried in the vault of a church of the convent . . . where no perſon can obtain an eaſy acceſs. We muſt preſume then, that there are ſome monks of the order engaged in the execution of the plan; and even if they knew not any thing of this circumſtance, they may have been corrupted by money; which, from the character of the prieſts, I naturally conclude muſt have been a conſiderable ſum. Do not laugh at my obſerſervation, if it ſhould ſeem ſingular to you. I thought it neceſſary to refute what you ſaid in your laſt letter;—that the deſire of acquiring wealth might probably be the aim of the conſpirators. That is certainly not the caſe; for what ſums of money might they

not

not already have ſpent, which the Prince, in his preſent ſituation, never could repay them? And if that was their aim, could they not have obtained it quicker and ſurer? How you came at preſent to have ſuch an idea, I cannot comprehend. Do not deceive yourſelf with the deluſive dream of hope: and, for heaven's ſake, do not believe that your bank-notes will be ſufficient to ſubvert the plans which are laid for the Prince. Let us make uſe of them for our own ſupport, whilſt we are endeavouring to deſtroy their views. And that cannot happen until I experience more of the buſineſs; for we are not able, at preſent, to prevent the attacks upon the Prince's religious opinions, unleſs his good genius ſhould aſſiſt us; but we cannot expect that at preſent. I am not perfectly clear as to the extent of their deſign. I believed that they wiſhed to make the Prince a mere

proſelyte;

profelyte; for we already have a number of inftances of the kind, and of the tricks made ufe of by the church, to tear what they call a ftray fheep from the claws of the devil. But this feems to me very improbable, for they would have found this an eafier tafk than that which they are purfuing. And what could induce the old man to have faid, that he had already fought to bring the Court of . . d . . over to his plans, if he did not mean to prove himfelf a pitiful boafter, which could not have been his intention. But, becaufe I cannot find out their aim, it does not prove that it muft neceffarily be the defire of acquiring authority. If I was willing to entertain you with more probabilities, I could fill my letter with them. But what am I about? I fee that my letter has increafed very much, and yet I have not related to you all that my heart wifhes, and what it is

 neceffary

neceffary for you to know. You fee how clearly I was determined to fupport my opinion. Have you entirely forgotten that I like to quarrel with you, and that you ufed to call me, in a joke, the quarrelfome friend? This harangue is fufficient to recal that to your memory.

Civitella ftaid with us the remainder of the night. They had no idea of retiring to reft; I was therefore obliged to call up the cook, to prepare a meal as quickly as poffible*.

* At Venice this is not at all extraordinary; for the defire of eating is (probably on account of the fea air) very great. We feldom fee Venetians without having fomething to eat in their hands. In the city, on every fide, you fee victuals of all kinds to be fold. Even at the Opera-houfes you are frequently interrupted by the noife of fellers of provifions; and in every houfe at midnight you find victuals preparing.

They ſat themſelves down to the table, but had no appetite. In vain did Civitella endeavour to be witty; in which he, in general, ſucceeds very well. The converſation turned upon apparitions, and Civitella now found an opportunity to reproach the Prince for his former coolneſs towards him. He excuſed himſelf, by pleading the ſtate of his mind. Civitella ſeemed ſatisfied, but begged of the Prince to follow the methods which he would propoſe, to eradicate his diſorder. His plans were all of ſuch a nature, that he could not help ſmiling; and by that means he ſucceeded, at laſt, to make the company ſomewhat merry; to which the Prince, however, contributed very little, but gave no ſigns of diſſatisfaction. He at laſt promiſed to follow the advice of the Marquis, who could not conceal his joy on the occaſion.

" Then, we have you again, my Prince," he exclaimed in exultation.

" Do not triumph too ſoon, Marquis," ſaid the Prince, " Will you always be able to find the right means to chaſe away my gloomy thoughts?"

" Always, if you follow my advice, gracious Prince!"

" You flatter yourſelf too much.—When you have proved it to my ſatisfaction I will believe you; but I fear that you will not ſucceed ſo eaſily as you expect."

" Do you know that confidence is half the remedy?—Above every thing elſe, likewiſe, comply with my firſt requeſt, and rather make yourſelf acquainted with the corporeal than the ſpiritual world; for, although I know, by ex-

 perience

perience, your influence in the latter, I neverthelefs cannot help fearing, that the gloom, which is the infeparable attendant upon creatures devoid of flefh and bones, might have a greater effect upon your mind.—But did the apparition, which I beheld this night, appear in confequence of your command, or have I incurred your difpleafure by any other means?"

Civitella betrayed great anxiety as he fpoke thefe laft words, and the Prince fneered—probably from the affociation of ideas. The Prince foon refumed his former countenance.

I was obliged now to ferve tea, and could not hear the end of the converfation; yet I concluded, from feveral words which I caught by accident, and from the Prince's countenance, that it had taken a happy turn, and

that

that the entertainment muſt have ended very well. The midnight hour is paſt, and although I would willingly chatter with you a little longer, I muſt finiſh my letter—I wiſh for repoſe.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

J. CUNDEE, PRINTER, IVY-LANE.